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Believe me
My dear Archbishop
Ever Truly Yours
E. Llandaff

REMAINS

OF THE LATE

EDWARD COPLESTON D.D.

BISHOP OF LLANDAFF

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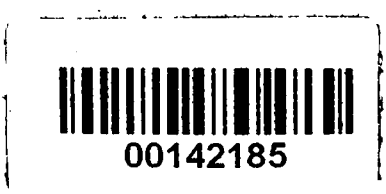
AN INTRODUCTION CONTAINING SOME REMINISCENCES OF HIS LIFE

By RICHARD WHATELY D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

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PREFACE.

THE Common-Place-Book of my much valued friend, the late Bishop Copleston, was, by his desire, transmitted to me as a bequest, with an evident design on his part, that I should publish any portions of it that I might consider likely to be generally interesting. And I have since received from several of his surviving friends, and from others who knew him only by reputation, intimations of their wish to the same effect.

While engaged in looking over this manuscript with that view, it occurred to me that I had heard several sermons of his which had appeared to me fully equal in value to anything he had published. And I have accordingly obtained, through the kindness of his surviving relatives, permission to subjoin to the present Publication such of his Manuscript Sermons as might appear to me the best adapted for it. To these I have added two of the Theological Lectures, which he wrote for the use of the students of Oriel College. And I have prefixed some scattered

reminiscences of his opinions on several important subjects, and of some transactions he was engaged in, where these have been either omitted, or but slightly noticed, in the *Memoir* already published, to which I have thus furnished something of a supplement.

In this record it has been my object to set forth, fully and fairly, what were his views on each point, and the course adopted by him, both when we concurred with each other, and in the few points whereon we differed.

Our disagreements, where any did exist, were never such as at all to impair mutual esteem and cordial friendship; and they never extended to fundamental *principles*, for which I was, on most points, in a great degree indebted to himself,* but related only to the *application* of those principles to particular cases.

If I shall have been the means of making my deceased friend better known to the Public, it will be a satisfaction to think that this can hardly fail to have the effect of making him so much the more highly appreciated.

* See the Dedication to my *Thoughts on Infant Baptism.*

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INTRODUCTION.

REMINISCENCES OF BISHOP COPLESTON.

THOUGH an interesting memoir of the late Bishop Copleston has already appeared, I have thought it not superfluous to prefix to the present volume of his *Remains*, a few scattered Reminiscences relative to some matters which have been either omitted, or very slightly mentioned in that *Memoir*.

I was intimate with the Bishop for upwards of forty years; and it was during that middle portion of his life, when his mind was in its greatest vigour, that I had most intercourse with him.

The editor of the *Memoir* has indeed industriously collected many particulars of what had taken place when he himself was a child, and even before he was born. But much of what came under my own immediate knowledge, may naturally be expected to have been more accurately and more strongly impressed on my memory, than if I had had only to trust to reports at second or third hand.

I shall therefore briefly notice whatever may occur to me as likely to interest the reader, without adhering to any chronological arrangement, but led rather by the connection of matter than of time.

The date of Bishop Copleston's birth has been recorded in the *Memoir*. It is rather a curious coincidence that he received the baptismal name of Edward; certainly without any reference to Oriel College, of which he afterwards became so distinguished an ornament, which college was founded by King Edward II.: and that having been born on the 2nd of February, the day on which is celebrated the anniversary of the foundation, he completed his fiftieth year, and the college its five hundredth, on the very same day, in the year 1826.

It is also a remarkable circumstance, which, though not like the last-mentioned, purely accidental, was partly dependent on accident, that all the most remarkable steps of his elevation in life took place *without any application whatever* on his part. He was elected Fellow of Oriel College, Provost of the same, Doctor of Divinity by Diploma, Dean of Chester, and Bishop of Llandaff (and at the same time Dean of St. Paul's), *all* without his having *offered himself* for any one of these appointments.

Now as for what relates to the deaneries and bishopric, this is not, it is to be hoped, anything uncommon. It does, indeed, undoubtedly sometimes occur that applications for such appointments are made, and sometimes, it is supposed, with success; at least, although no one can be certain that an applicant has been successful in *consequence* of his application, this has certainly not proved in every instance a *bar* to success. But doubtless the great majority of cases, and those in which the promotion has been the

best deserved, have been those of persons who never did, and never would, use solicitation for themselves.

I except, of course, from what is here said, some *colonial* bishoprics, which are such that it must often be difficult to find a well-qualified man, in easy circumstances, who will consent to undergo, with a scanty revenue, expatriation, privations, and severe toil, with perhaps the hazard of an unhealthy climate. In such a case it is not only allowable, but laudable for such a man to come forward and offer himself for such difficult and scantily-requited services.

As for the Headship of a college, it is not at all uncommon, or reckoned at all discreditable, for a man to offer himself as a candidate; though there are many instances of its being spontaneously offered.

But a University-Degree (other than an *honorary* degree) is very rarely indeed conferred, except on such as have presented themselves as candidates for it. And the same may be said of a college-fellowship; I mean where there is really an *election* to it; not a mere succession, on the claim of 'Founder's Kin,' or something of that kind. And at Oriel College in particular (and some few others), there is usually a strong competition among a considerable number of candidates. Yet of this college was Mr. Copleston elected Fellow without having ever offered himself.

It came about in this way: there are, at Oriel, some few of what are called 'close-fellowships' (in some colleges the greater part are of this description); that is, founded for the especial benefit of certain counties, dioceses, or schools. A native of the spe-

cified county, &c., is to be elected if there be one duly qualified, *absolutely*, even though *comparatively* inferior to some candidate from another county. But if no suitable candidate from the favoured district should appear, the fellowship becomes open to free competition. This is the utmost extent, in most instances at least, I believe in all, of the restriction imposed by the Founders.

I need not, I trust, apologise for mentioning such particulars; because, though well-known to most Oxford and Cambridge men (not, however, to all even of these), there is a large proportion of the Public wholly ignorant of them. And much attention has, of late, been called to the subject of college-foundations.

So much misapprehension prevails on the subject, that when conversing, several years ago, with a person who was himself a member of one of the universities, I found him not only ignorant of the rules laid down by the Founders of such Fellowships as those just mentioned, but also, when informed of them, fully convinced that they must altogether nullify the original design. The Fellows, he felt sure, would always elect the person they preferred, without any reference to his birth-place; and would allege, rightly or wrongly, that the other candidates were unqualified. Nor could he be convinced to the contrary. He was so unacquainted, not only with the facts, but with human nature, as not to have the least idea that the departure from the Founder's Will, when it does take place, is almost always on the *opposite* side. It is felt to be

such a hardship to reject a candidate as absolutely unqualified, and the feelings are so much more engaged on the side of an individual than of the Public, that a native of the specified county is generally elected as a matter of course, even when utterly deficient in the personal qualifications required by the Founder. And thus the provisions designed for encouraging learning in a certain district or school have often had a directly opposite effect.

At Oriel College, however, it was the practice to adhere strictly to the Founder's designs. And on a particular occasion, when there was a vacancy in one of the close fellowships, the candidates, all of them being of the specified county, were found on examination to be quite incligible. When it was resolved that none of them should be elected, no time was to be lost in deciding the next point; since the very next day was the one fixed by the Statutes for the election.

Such was the reputation and known character of Mr. Copleston, then a scholar of Corpus College, that he was unanimously fixed on; and early the next morning the Dean of Oriel College called at his rooms to make him the offer. He was subjected to a brief examination for form's sake, and was then regularly elected. At eight in the morning, he had not the slightest expectation of anything unusual; and at noon, he was probationary Fellow of Oriel College.

It ought not to be omitted that, being intimate with one of the unsuccessful candidates, he had, at

first, hesitated on that ground, to accept the offer; but was prevailed on by the assurance, that if he refused, some other person (and not one of the original candidates) would be applied to.

The Provostship he was invited to accept by the unanimous voices of the Fellows, as is recorded in the *Memoir;* where, however, by a misprint, the name of '*Tierney*' is put instead of '*Tinney.*'

As it is usual for the Head of a House to take a Doctor's Degree, the University, to mark their sense of the service done in his able reply to the attacks of the *Edinburgh Review,** spontaneously conferred on him the degree of D.D., by diploma. This is the highest honour the University can confer, and it is accordingly a very rare one.

Considering how numerous were the contributors to the *Edinburgh Review* at that time, and the ability of many of them, and their merciless severity, it required no small courage in an individual to step forward in a public cause, and 'beard the lion in his den.' And the undertaking was not more bold than the execution was able and successful. The *Reply to the Calumnies,* &c., received the honour which, whatever may be its value in other respects, is at least an extremely rare one, of an *Answer* from

* It may be worth noticing that there is a slight mistake in the *Memoir* (p. 28), in reference to his 'Advice to a Young Reviewer.' It was an article in the *British Critic* (on Mant's Poems), not in the *Edinburgh Review*, that called forth that witty production.

the Reviewers, evincing much anger and alarm, but so far from strengthening their cause, that it called forth a second and still more triumphant Reply.

The lesson was not lost on the *Review*. Its articles relating to Oxford, for the last thirty years and more, have displayed much more caution, and far greater ability, as well as better taste.*

The Work which he published in answer to the *Edinburgh Review*, reminds me to notice his opinions respecting the system of the University and of the Colleges. What would have been his opinion of the proceedings, and of the recommendations, of the University Commission, lately appointed, cannot, of course, be known. In some points it is likely he would have dissented from the Commissioners. But he expressly declares, in the work just alluded to, his willingness that public investigation and needful reforms should take place. 'I never wish,' says he (p. 186), 'to see the University placed above responsibility to public opinion. I never wish to see her shielded from the fear of public censure, reposing securely on her endowments, and disregarding the clamours of the world around her. It is the terror of the public voice which keeps in awe our very Government, and all our public institutions; and when once that salutary check is removed, we know how soon every ill

* With the single exception of one most offensive article, the author of which however, not long after expressed publicly and very strongly (what it would have been no discredit to the conductors to have expressed also) his shame and sorrow for what he had said.—See *Memoir*, p. 93.

weed springs up and ripens in every quarter of the estate, and how indolent all its stewards and labourers become. To the voice of the Public we ought always to answer with respect, and to render an account, if called upon, of our proceedings. And when that account is fairly given in, I do not fear that a judgment will be passed upon the vain and ungenerous expectation of perfect virtue.'

And, though active in introducing, both into his own College and into the University, such needful improvements as lay within their own reach, he notices, in a passage a little before the one just cited, one of the most prominent defects under which many colleges labour, and which nothing but an *Act of Parliament* can remove. 'In most Colleges the Fellowships are appropriated to certain schools, dioceses, counties, and in some cases even to parishes, with a preference given to Founder's kindred, for ever. Many qualifications, quite foreign to intellectual talents and learning, are thus enjoined by the Founders; and in very few instances is a free choice allowed to the Fellows of a College, upon any vacancy in their number. Merit, therefore, has not such a provision made as the extent of the endowments might seem to promise. Now, it is certain that each of these various constitutions cannot be the best. The best of them, perhaps, are those where an unrestrained choice is left among all candidates who have taken one degree. The worst are those which are appropriated to schools, from which boys of sixteen or seventeen are forwarded to a fixed station

and emolument, which nothing can forfeit but flagrant misconduct, and which no exertion can render more valuable.' (P. 184.)

It is true he goes on to speak with approbation of the tender regard shown by the English Legislature for the authority of Wills, and the sacredness of private property; and expresses his confidence that no 'personal loss' will be allowed to fall on the 'present individuals,' and that no change will be made without careful consideration. In all this, every reasonable and moderate man will, I conceive, agree with him. But he was far from having that idolatrous reverence for the Wills of our ancestors which is shown by some, who seem to regard the earth as the property rather of the dead than of the living.

I have often heard him express his views on this subject; and once, in particular, I remember a long discussion of it between him and a friend, who maintained extreme principles on that point. That endowments, and the rules under which they are placed, ought not to be hastily and rashly meddled with, is admitted by all sensible men. But it should be remembered that a man's disposal of property after his death, is no *natural* right. It is a right conferred (and within certain limits, very wisely conferred) by law. Now, it is a well-known maxim in this country, that 'the law abhors perpetuities.' When, therefore, an exception to this rule is allowed, as in the case of endowments, it is not too much to require that some reason should be shown for the exception. It may fairly be expected, not only that the funds

shall not be expended in a manner positively injurious to the public, (for that ought not to be permitted even during the owner's life-time,) but also that their application should be in some degree useful. It would, indeed, be too much to require that the provisions made should always be such as the Legislature for the time being should determine to be the *most* beneficial possible; for on this, men's opinions will generally differ greatly, and be liable to frequent changes. But it does seem fair to require that an endowment should, in some degree, answer *some* good purpose, and not be a mere waste.

And, moreover, it seems but reasonable that when, from the altered circumstances of the times, or otherwise, a foundation fails altogether of the object designed, a change in the original provisions should be made by the Legislature. If, for instance, it appears that some Founder of a College, founded also a school, for the express purpose of providing a supply of qualified persons to be Scholars and Fellows of his College, and appointed that these scholarships should be filled up from that school, then, if it should appear that both the School and the College would be improved, and that better-qualified persons would be elected, if there were a perfectly free competition, this might be deemed a sufficient ground for an alteration of the statutes.

Again, in the days when Fellowships were founded for *natives* of certain counties, such a native would usually be one whose ancestors and kindred had long been settled in the county, and perhaps possessed

property there; some powerful cause being necessary to induce any family to undertake even a journey to London; which was then a greater undertaking than a visit to the Continent is now. But in these days of easy, and cheap, and rapid locomotion, the place where any one (above the lowest classes) happens to have been born, is frequently no indication of any family connection with that locality. The founders themselves, therefore, if it were possible to consult them, would hardly wish for the continuance of a restriction which answers no good purpose whatever.

And as for the preference assigned, in some cases, to 'Founder's Kin' for ever, it is clearly of the character of a perpetual *entail;* which is adverse to the spirit of our law.

The chief part of what has here been said is the substance of what I heard from the Bishop, in the conversation above alluded to, and on other occasions.

One proposal, which has been made from time to time by several persons—the limitation in *time*, of Fellowships, (as is the case in some few colleges,) never found favour with Bishop Copleston, nor, I believe, ever will, with any one who judges from an intimate practical knowledge of our Universities, rather than from theoretical conjecture. The proposal proceeds on the supposition, that, usually, or at least very frequently, a man sits down for life on a Fellowship, without making any further exertion, or looking to anything beyond. But, in fact,

such cases, if ever any such do occur, are so extremely rare as not to be worth noticing. If indeed the average value of Fellowships were five times what it is, or if marriage, or a valuable benefice, or other property, did not vacate them, the succession might be so slow as to call for some such expedient to quicken it. But as the case stands, it will be found, on inquiry, that the average time for which a Fellowship is actually held is *less* than that to which it has been proposed to limit them. Nay, if a comparison be instituted between such a College, for instance, as Oriel, where the Fellowships (which are unlimited in duration) are of even more than the average value, and therefore offer a better prospect of a life-provision than some others, and one of the colleges of terminable Fellowships, I believe it will be found that they hardly differ at all in the average time during which Fellowships are actually held. And yet the practical difference, in another point of view, is enormous. For, great is the value of a feeling of security:—of the confidence that if a man's schemes and hopes do ultimately fail, at the worst, he will not be cast on the world in middle life utterly destitute, without means of support, and without social position. It is not from anticipating, as highly probable, the loss of a ship, or the burning of a house, that a man is content to pay much more than the value of the risk, in insurance, but for the sake of a feeling of security. Suppose a shipwrecked crew to have saved themselves from the sea which had threatened to swallow them, on a small uninhabited island, which

afforded them wherewithal to provide themselves necessary food and shelter. They would probably be far from designing to pass the rest of their lives there; or even of remaining there any long time. They would probably set about some plan of repairing or building a boat in which to embark for their own country; and would perhaps calculate on spending only a few days in their place of refuge. But it would be a consolation to them to feel that, if through various accidents their departure were again and again delayed, they would be at least safe from perishing. How different would be their feelings, if they perceived, that, at the next spring-tide, the sea would cover the island!

Now this comparison may illustrate the case of Fellowships. I myself, when elected at Oriel, had formed no design of retaining a Fellowship for life. In fact, I held it for only nine years. But if I had been offered the choice between that Fellowship and one of *double the value*, but which was to expire in nine or ten years, I should not have hesitated a moment in preferring the smaller. And such, I apprehend, would be the feeling of the great majority.

The effect, therefore, of the proposed change would be, to *destroy* a great part of the value of Fellowships, as effectually, and as completely without any compensating benefit, as if one were to take just so much money and throw it into the sea.

One improvement in the examination-statute, which was, of course, entirely within the reach of the University itself, he earnestly and perseveringly, but vainly, recommended; which was, to have the names printed of *all* who pass their examination for the Bachelor's Decree; as is done at Trinity College, Dublin. At present the names of those only are printed who obtain what is called an 'Honour;' *i. e.* who are distinguished beyond those who merely satisfy the Examiners. Of these there were at first two classes only; which were augmented afterwards to three, and ultimately to four. But the names of those in the fifth class;—that is, of all the rest,—are not published.

His proposal was, that they should be. He was for considering *all* as having obtained *some* honour, who, on examination, had been pronounced worthy of an Academical Degree. It is a reproach, he thought, to the University, that the attainment of a degree, without any further distinction, should be regarded as no honour, but rather a discredit.

This view is adverted to in a letter of his, printed in the *Memoir*, p. 210. In that letter he also throws out the suggestion (as several others have done from time to time), of having the candidates of each Class arranged in order of merit, and not, as at present, alphabetically. I do not know, however, that he ever very fully and carefully discussed this last question. I myself have always, on this point, agreed with the great majority of the most experienced Oxford Tutors and Examiners, that such a change would be for

the worse. Its advantages, which I do not deny, would be, I am convinced, more than counterbalanced by several disadvantages. But, above all, there is one objection, which in my opinion far outweighs all that can be said in favour of the plan. An arrangement in the order of merit, would cut off that freedom which candidates now, much to their benefit, enjoy, of following each the bent of his own mind in the choice of the subjects and the books in which he shall be examined.

An attempt might indeed be made, for a time, to continue this liberty under the proposed change. But the attempt would soon fail. To decide exactly on the *comparative* merits of candidates nearly equal, and who had prepared themselves in *different* books, and different departments of knowledge, would more than double the labour, great as it now is, of the Examiners; and, after all, would never be so satisfactorily accomplished as not to leave room for perpetual complaints.

I know, from the experience of examining numerous candidates for Fellowships, how difficult and anxious a task it is to decide (as *must* be done in that case) on comparative merit; and that, when usually it is only between two or three,—the best out of perhaps ten or twelve candidates,—that the competition exists; since there is no need (as there would be in degree-examinations) to place in order of merit, the inferior ones, who have no chance of election. But the competitors for a Fellowship are all examined in the *same* passages of the same books, and set to write on the

same subjects. And, moreover, they are examined *privately* and *separately*, that no one may derive an advantage from overhearing another. And a similar course it would, I have no doubt, be found necessary to adopt, under the proposed alteration, for the degree-examinations; the utility of which would, I am convinced, be thereby greatly impaired.

The Bishop's proposal, however, of printing the names of the candidates of every Class, and thus proclaiming the attainment of a degree at all, as an honour, I have always heartily approved.

But the fact is, that very many persons came to the University so very ill-prepared for such a course of study as properly belongs to a *University*, that most of their undergraduate-period is occupied in learning what they ought to have learnt at school. And the standard of examination for the Degree of B. A. is in consequence so much lowered, that to have merely passed it at the end of three years, will never be regarded as a credit, but rather the reverse.

The obvious and only remedy for this (and a very easy and complete remedy too), would be to establish a *preliminary* examination by the University, to test the fitness of each candidate for Matriculation. At present there is none. It is left entirely to the Governors of each *College* to examine a candidate either strictly or slightly, or (as often happens) not at all. And I need not enlarge on the various temptations some of them are exposed to to receive ill-prepared candidates.

I put forward accordingly the above suggestion

when Head of a House, at Oxford, and (in conjunction with the present Provost of Oriel College) earnestly and perseveringly urged its adoption. We were at first in a very small minority, which, however, gradually increased till it approached very near to a majority. And in my evidence before the University Commissioners, I pressed this point on their attention. I urged, that if this one alteration were made, it would, besides its direct and immediate advantages, prepare the way for other improvements; while, without this, all other plans of improvement, though they might look well upon paper, would, in practice, prove abortive.

And I had some correspondence on the subject with Bishop Copleston, in which I pointed out that, besides other and greater advantages, this alteration would facilitate (which nothing else could) the adoption of the one he had been advocating. For, no one acquainted with the University can doubt, that the examination for a Bachelor's degree without honours, is no more than a lad of seventeen or eighteen ought to be able to pass, if he has been at a really good school, and is not either so naturally deficient or so negligent as to disqualify him for an academical career. If, therefore, candidates were subjected to such an examination *previously* to *matriculation*, they would *begin* their University-course just where many of them now *end* it. The standard of examination for a degree might then be raised so as to make the certificate a real credit; and Oxford would become a real and a

good *University* to many to whom it is now little more than an indifferent *school.*

The Bishop laid before me several objections, that had been, or might be, urged against the proposal. His letters to me on the subject, I have not at hand; but my replies to the objections, in a letter which I will take the liberty of inserting, will sufficiently show what the objections themselves were.

The reader will please to bear in mind, that all I said in the following letter, of the existing schools, colleges, and universities, relates to the state of things nearly a quarter of a century ago:—

'I am obliged to you for stating the objections which have occurred to you, to the proposed statute,* as I thence derive the satisfaction of being convinced that I know the worst; having little or no apprehension of being hereafter encountered with any fresh arguments of any weight, omitted by you. It is also a great advantage to have the arguments drawn out, as you do, like regular soldiers in a fair field, instead of engaging with an indistinct or sophistical disputant, whose reasons are like a rabble of barbarians scattered up and down, and lurking in bushes. It would, however, be mortifying to me, to think that you had finally made up your mind on the question; but I know that you are accustomed to state objections to any system or plan,

* One for establishing a university-examination for candidates for Matriculation, which was then before the Board of Heads of Houses.

in their full force, for the sake of ascertaining all that can be said on each side.

'The proposed plan is, as you judged, designed to operate on schools much as the degree-examination-statute did on colleges, in order that men may come to the University *as* a *University;* i. e. sufficiently grounded in early rudiments to be capable of profiting by college lectures, instead of having to acquire, here, the elementary knowledge which schools ought and *profess* to furnish.

'The answer suggested is, that schools, as it is, perform their duty better than colleges. I cannot admit either premiss. I deny that schools do perform their duty better than colleges do theirs; and I also maintain that, even if it were so, this would not render the proposed measure less desirable.

'For, the question is, not whether schoolmasters are as diligent as *college-tutors*, but whether they are as diligent as they *might be* induced to become. Both are servants of the public. Now, if you had two servants, neither of them giving complete satisfaction, but one of them *less* negligent than the other, you would not scruple to reform *him*, if opportunity offered, on the ground that the other was worse: especially if it so happened that the improvement of that other was *in this way* the most attainable: which is precisely my view of the present case. For, I conceive that the Universities are capable of indefinite improvement, *if* we begin by this step; but, that unless we secure men's coming here tolerably grounded in elementary knowledge, we must ever

remain, as is too much the case now, in a great measure, a *school*, and a bad school too, rather than a University.

'But I also dispute the fact. To compare schools generally with colleges generally, may seem a vague inquiry; but take the *most in repute* of each,—Eton, Westminster, Harrow, &c. versus Oriel, Brasenose, Balliol, Christ Church, &c. I do believe that the tutors in all the higher colleges are for the most part exemplary in diligence. I can testify for most of those of Oriel, from yourself to the present day, that they have laboured a great deal, even at what is *out* of their proper province; viz. teaching their pupils many things which they confessedly ought to have learned at school. Now, as for schools, I do assure you that in a late discussion at the Board, it was not only admitted that a great majority of the boys were sent off shamefully ill-grounded, but it was even urged as *an argument against* the measure, that this *could not possibly be avoided*, and that consequently we should be requiring of masters what it was out of their power to perform. The numbers, it was contended, were so great, as to make it impossible to secure an attention to elementary knowledge;—that we never could hope that they could instruct properly more than a very small proportion;—and that at the largest of all, Eton, if any boy turned out a sound scholar (except the few who have private tutors), it must be in spite of the system pursued there, and not in consequence of it. This, I say, was admitted on all hands. I had only to answer, that I was con-

fident they *could* do their duty better, and *would*, if we adopted the statute; but that if they really could not, the sooner they shut their doors the better.

'You observe, that it is natural schools should be less negligently conducted than colleges, because the master's bread depends on his reputation. It does so; but I much doubt whether his reputation depends on his real merit; I mean, merit of that kind which I have in view; viz. the diligent elementary instruction of *the great mass*. His reputation depends but too much on a small number of *first-classes* and *prizes*, gained by boys he has brought up. It is like a lottery; the sale of tickets depends indeed on the supposed chance of profit; but men's calculations of this are dazzled by the blaze of a few £20,000 prizes.

'And as for the smaller schools, they bait their hooks for fond mothers, with roast-beef and plum-pudding, salubrious air, clean sheets, &c.

'I will not say, however, that, if I had been left to mere antecedent *conjecture*, I might not have come to a different conclusion from what experience has taught me. And so also in the case of colleges; most of which, as you observe, do not depend for their bread on their reputation; yet, in fact, is it found that those are the least diligent whose pecuniary motives are the weakest?

'If any stranger, ten years ago, had been told that the Principal of this Hall* depended *entirely*, and the

* The reader is to observe that a Hall, at Oxford, is unendowed. It is entirely from the room-rents and fees, paid by independent members, that the Principal and other officers of a Hall are sup-

Provost of Oriel, *not at all*, on the independent members of his Society for his income, *which*, would he have guessed to be the most likely to exert himself in the cause of discipline and good education? Would he not have made a guess the very reverse of the reality?

'And you should remember that it is the Head of a *Hall* that makes this remark.

'I fully concur in your objection to private tuition in the extent to which it is now carried; and I rejoice in the hope that attentive reflection will bring you to the same conclusions to which it has long since brought me; that it cannot be checked, to any good purpose, if at all, by any other means than the adoption of the proposed plan. You complain, justly, that while tuition is *called* cheap, a father finds himself called on to pay £50 a year to a private Tutor, beyond his calculations. Now this is not an evil confined to candidates for Honours, whom you propose to preclude from receiving this private assistance. The *great majority* of the private Tutors are those employed in dragging through their examinations men who have come too backward to keep up, unassisted, with the very humblest of the College lectures. Indeed, I can assure you, as a fact, that one of the very objections urged against our Statute, is, that it would *throw out of employment* these Tutors, who are very deserving men!

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ported. At the time referred to, St. Alban's Hall was crowded with members, such as they were; to none of whom was there even a pretence of affording a particle of instruction or care of any kind.

'Some College Tutors, perhaps, may be negligent; but the pupils of many who, I know, are not so, are compelled, by their backwardness, to resort to that help. Private Tutors are the *crutches* of our lame system. If you can restore strength to a lame man, you do him good; but by simply *taking away* his crutches, you leave him worse off than before. And, if the prohibition were enforced, of private tuition, to candidates for Honours, the character indeed of private Tutors might be changed, but the number would not be at all diminished. For, the College Tutors would, in many cases, be induced to devote *more* of their time, gladly, to the higher description of men, and would thus be forced to omit *more* of such elementary lectures as they now give; so that *more* of the backward men would be driven to seek private help.

'The proposed plan, on the other hand, would do all that *could* be done towards superseding the *want* of these crutches.

'It may be alleged, you observe, that the Head and Tutors of any College are the best judges, who is fit to be received into their Society. True; and no one thinks of restricting them in *that*, if that is *all* they desire. My Porter is a member *of the Hall*, and as long as he behaves peaceably, the University has nothing to do with him; but if I seek to make him, or to make any one, a member *of the University*, then, surely *that* Body—like every other Society—must be allowed to be the judge who shall be admitted a member, and who excluded. The Heads of Houses,

therefore, could not reasonably complain of any infringement of their rights, even had the proposed statute extended to *all;* instead of being limited, as it is, to those only of the *independent* members who mean to *graduate.** For, it should be remembered, that the character of each member of the University, (or of any other Society) affects, *pro tanto*, the credit and welfare of the whole Body.

'But if it be meant that the Tutors of each College are better qualified than any publicly-appointed Board of Examiners, to *ascertain the proficiency* of each candidate, this I could only admit if each College had separately the power of conferring *degrees:* because they would have probably different kinds of examination for the degree, and different kinds of lectures preparatory to such examination, and consequently each would be the best judge of a student's fitness for entering on the course of study required. But as it is, the college lectures being supposed to have reference to the one common University-examination for University-degrees, I cannot see how the Tutors of each College, separately, *can* be, on the whole, *better* fitted to judge of a candidate's admissibility, than public University Examiners. At the utmost, they can only be *equally good.* For it is intended that the public

* In order to mitigate the change, it was proposed that there should be an exemption from the preliminary examination, (1) for those who had scholarships in any College, and (2) for those who might wish to reside some time at Oxford without taking a degree, and whom some College might be willing to receive. These exceptions were proposed not as anything in itself beneficial, but to obviate opposition.

Examiners should be *the very College Tutors* themselves, or those who have been, or are fit to be, such. There are, suppose, fifty or sixty of these: now if we suppose *each one* of these fully competent to the task (which is the most favourable supposition), then surely it must be possible to find *two or three of them* competent.

'But supposing all College Tutors, in perpetual succession, both fully able and willing to subject candidates to a proper examination, and suppose all Heads of Houses also resolute to resist all solicitations, and to admit no one who was not fully approved, still I should feel convinced that the effect on schools, both on masters and boys, would be much stronger if the measure emanated from the *University*. Else, why should not each *College* give testimonials for *degrees* also? And then we should be no longer a University, but a loose confederation of many Universities.

'But you well know how remote from fact and from possibility is the hypothesis on which I have proceeded.

'A young man, who has small store of learning or of money, takes a fancy to marry a portionless girl. His immediate resource is to *take pupils*; (*take in* would be the proper expression;) he has only to ask *enough*. If he modestly ask £100, he may fail; but if his terms are £200 or £300, ignorant persons conclude he must be qualified; especially if he have a Degree of D.D., which they not unnaturally conclude must imply the highest perfection of learning the University can impart. He knows, perhaps, enough of

Greek, to lecture (I speak advisedly), 'in the Greek Testament, with the English by his side.' His pupils come here qualified as one might expect; and if one Head of a House refuse them, another is prevailed on by solicitation, and by promises of what *shall* be done, under a *private tutor*. The men find themselves excluded (without most irksome and intense exertion) from attaining even mediocrity in academical pursuits; and their emulation is gradually diverted to pigeon-shooting and boat-racing, &c.

'The more I consider the subject, the more I am convinced that we can never possess the character of a *University* till we adopt a plan for securing in all who are admitted a tolerable foundation on which to build a course of manly study.'

I do not know how far the above reasons operated on the Bishop's mind. I do not recollect receiving any answer to the letter from which I have given an extract. And not long after I ceased to have any official connection with the University.

It is not unlikely that the tone of several attacks made on the University of Oxford, in, and previous to, the year 1810, (such as those to which Dr. Copleston replied,) may have proved, for a time, a hindrance to the introduction of some desirable reforms, through the agency of calm, rational, deliberate, public opinion.

For when many charges that cannot be substantiated are brought forward against any person or institution, an excessive reaction sometimes ensues,

and a sympathy with the assailed party will, perhaps, be carried even to an extreme. And especially is this likely to take place when the attack is evidently dictated by malice, and conducted with scurrilous insolence, with utter disregard of truth, and by writers displaying such ignorance as proves them to be incompetent judges. Persons of good taste are disgusted by vulgar abuse; good reasoners detect fallacious arguments; men of learning despise ignorance when pretensions to superior knowledge are put forth; and those who are acquainted with some of the facts, detect falsehoods. And though the common run of careless readers, who have but little of the above qualifications, may be amused for the moment with saucy flippancy, the impression likely to be ultimately made on the public mind is, that none of the charges brought forward are deserving of any attention at all.

The Work on the Currency, which appeared in the form of letters addressed to Mr. Peel (the late Sir Robert), attracted much attention, and probably exercised no small influence on the public mind. The forcible and luminous reasoning in these letters must always be admired by every competent judge who peruses them.* But the value and importance of such

* It is remarked by the author of the *Memoir*, that this is 'one of the instances in which the sparkles of a temporary controversy are concentrated with such power as to produce a permanently useful light.' (P. 83.)

a publication is likely to be under-estimated by any one at the present day who is unacquainted with, or does not reflect on, the circumstances of those times. No science has made more rapid strides in what relates to a generally-diffused acquaintance with it, than political economy in the last thirty years. What were regarded by many as paradoxes when those letters appeared, are now admitted as elementary truths, hardly needing even to be formally stated. And fallacies, which would now be thought scarcely worth notice, were at that time not only generally received, but acted on in the most important national concerns.

It was generally believed that this publication proved, for many years, a bar to Dr. Copleston's elevation to the Bench, and that he must himself have been well aware that such a consequence was to be expected. *Some* special reason there must certainly have been for the passing over, for so many years, of one who was then universally considered the first man at Oxford. And the way in which this was accounted for seems not at all unreasonable.

He was indeed, in general politics, a most decided Tory; that is, an adherent to the views of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville; both of whom he greatly admired as statesmen, and with the latter he was personally intimate. And I have heard him remark on the coalition that nobleman once formed with the Whigs, as the only point he disapproved of in his political career. But he strongly differed from the then Tory Administration on two points—the Roman

Catholic Disabilities, on which question he concurred with Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville,* and the Currency, in which the Public took a very warm interest, and on which Ministers most particularly, *needed* support. He might very well, however, have abstained from giving to any of their measures a positive support contrary to his own judgment, and might then have trusted to his general merits to obtain for him the appropriate notice.† Many persons no doubt in his situation would thus have earned for themselves the 'safe reward of silence,'‡ on the plea that it was no business of theirs more than of any one else, to speak their sentiments on such and such points. And hence we too often find that the interests of the Public are left to those who have some private or party-ends in view, or to those who have nothing to lose or to risk in coming forward.

Dr. Copleston, however, was not one whose public spirit could be smothered by personal considerations; nor again, was he one of those bigots to political

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* The vehement opposition to the election of Lord Grenville as Chancellor in the year 1810 (in which contest Mr. Copleston strenuously exerted himself), sprung chiefly from his well-known views on this point, and was not at all connected (as the editor of the *Memoir* seems to suppose, p. 25) with 'old *Tory*-prejudices;' for all three of the candidates were of tory-principles. But, as is well remarked in the *Memoir*, Lord Grenville's supporters voted for one who was *not in the Ministry*, nor ever likely to be again.

† It is a curious accident that there happened to be at one time no less than seven Bishops of the Established Church who were, or had been, members of the one small College of Oriel; viz. four English, two Irish, and one Colonial.

‡ 'Tuta silentio merces.'—Hor.

party who cannot see, or, at least, will not acknowledge, any good on one side, or any error on the other. In his general political views, he concurred, as I have said, with the Ministers whose financial measures he boldly censured; so boldly, as to exclude himself from all chance of preferment at their hands. And yet he never made any secret of opinions on other points which would be likely to render him equally unacceptable to the opposite party. 'That the opposite course should have been pursued, and should have prevailed,' (viz. the denial either that the currency was depreciated, when it was, or, that this was an evil,) 'I can only account for by considering the nature of the cause in support of which these financial doctrines were first avowed, and the political hostility to that cause which was declared by many of their adversaries.'*

I have seen, however, in a quarterly Periodical an Article on the *Memoir*, which, with unhesitating coolness, speaks of him as a Whig. Whether a representation so emphatically the reverse of the truth was intentional, or merely a mistake arising from utter carelessness as to a matter in which the truth might have been so easily ascertained, either by the slightest inquiry, or from the letters to Mr. Peel, or from the

* 'Whatever my own opinion of the doctrine may be, it certainly *does not arise from any disapprobation of the policy* then pursued, nor from *any leaning towards the foreign politics* of its opponents. On the contrary, if that cause had required much greater pecuniary sacrifices from this nation than have been made, according to my judgment it was well worth them all.'—*First Letter to Right Hon. Robert Peel*, p. 5, third edit.

published correspondence with Lord Dudley, we have no means of knowing. But on either supposition, such a misstatement is inexcusable.

Not that it is really any reproach (though the writer evidently so meant it) to be a Whig, any more than to be a Tory. I myself, who have never been either, nor adopted the creed of any party, have been intimately acquainted with several worthy and patriotic men of every party. But whatever is worth mentioning at all, is worth stating correctly.

And, in the present case, the writer could scarcely complain if the worst interpretation were put on his misstatement; because, in the same Article, he puts forward another, which will hardly admit of any more favourable interpretation. He represents it as the established custom at Oriel College, at the time when Bishop Copleston was Fellow, to dine at four o'clock, and devote the whole remainder of the day to conviviality! The reader will perceive that this implies a very heavy charge; and, indeed, it is commented on as such by the writer himself. It represents persons to whom is entrusted the education of the young nobility and gentry of England as a set of luxurious, indolent sensualists. Such a charge is what no good man would bring forward without most careful inquiry and full proof. An injurious imputation thrown out in careless ignorance must be accounted one of those 'idle words' for which men will have to render a heavy account hereafter! But even this is, I fear, too favourable a view of the present case. A writer who knew so accurately the

dinner-hour, could hardly have been ignorant that the hour for afternoon *chapel* was *six*, and that it was the constant practice of the Fellows to repair from the common-room to chapel, and thence to disperse to their several occupations. One can hardly doubt, therefore, that the untruth I have alluded to was a wilful and deliberate calumny.

The publication alluded to just above, of some of Lord Dudley's letters, was designed to be followed up by the publication of some more. But his Lordship's executors objected; not, surely, from any apprehension that the memory of the deceased was likely to suffer from anything published by his friend, but for some reasons best known to themselves, respecting which there are conjectures afloat, but no explanations given. They succeeded, however, in obtaining an injunction; and the design was dropped.

From these letters, and also from publications of his own, besides his recorded speeches in Parliament, and some letters published in the *Memoir*, may be collected the grounds on which the Bishop advocated the removal of Roman Catholic disabilities. Whatever changes took place, and some did take place, in his views on that subject, he never admitted the claim to that removal as a matter of *absolute right*, to be conceded irrespectively of all considerations of public safety and national welfare. He thought, as of course every good man must, that we are bound not to impose or to maintain any penalties,

or any restrictions—even on those who, perhaps, may not be disposed to show kindness or justice to *us*—when these can be dispensed with as not requisite for the public welfare. To return evil for evil, on the ground of the alleged ill-desert of the parties, is manifestly to act on an unchristian principle.

But beyond this, which evidently resolves the whole question into one of public expediency, he never went.

On that question of expediency, *i. e.* of natural safety, his opinions underwent some change in his later years. He had, I believe, calculated—in common with several other sensible and worthy men—on *gratitude* being shown for concessions made, notoriously, and one may say, confessedly, to intimidation; a result, of which, I believe, since the world was created, all history cannot furnish a single instance.

The increased grant to Maynooth College he opposed; and his protest against it is printed in the *Memoir*.

The case was a very difficult one; and no reasonable man can, I think, wonder at those who voted either way. For, each of the three (and there were but three) alternatives, was open—as every man of common sense must on reflection perceive—to very weighty objections. The three courses which lay before Government, were, either (1) to retain everything on the same footing as for the last half-century,

by moving for the usual grant; or (2) to retrace our steps, by cutting off the grant which had been for so many years calculated on; or (3) to augment the grant, and place it on a different footing, so as to obviate the necessity of a yearly debate.

Sir Robert Peel's description (on this and on several other occasions) of such a threefold choice, was often derided by unthinking persons, as if it had been some original and favourite fancy of his own, instead of being a necessary condition of human affairs. For, it perpetually happens in every department of life, that there will be three, and only three, possible courses before us; and that there will be objections, greater or less, to each of them; which it argues no superior wisdom to overlook, or to omit balancing with each other. For instance, in pursuing one's course through some difficult tract of country, it will often be a matter of anxious deliberation whether (1) to make a halt where we are, or (2) to return, or (3) to advance.

In the case now under consideration, there were, as I have said, strong objections to each of these courses; and yet, as one of the three *must* be adopted, it would manifestly have been extremely rash to reject any one of them, simply on the ground of those objections, without taking into account the objections to each of the two others.

How far this was done, or left undone, by each of those who took part in that debate, any one who takes an interest in the question (which of course it

would be out of place here to discuss),* may see by looking over the Reports of the debates. But it is worth observing, in reference to the protest, that the reasons given in it, which are undoubtedly weighty, have no reference at all to the only *novel* feature of the proposed measure—the *increase* of the grant—but would equally apply to *any* such grant, whether of 30,000*l.*, or 3000*l.*, or 30*l.* Any one accordingly looking at the protest alone, and having no knowledge of the circumstances of the case, would never doubt that such a grant was a thing hitherto unheard of, and now proposed for the *first time*. That many such grants had been long since made (whether rightly or wrongly) in several of our colonial possessions;—that the support, in this manner, of Maynooth College itself, had been introduced (some think, unwisely,) by Mr. Pitt, half a century before;—and that the grants annually made to it ever since, had been unopposed by the far greater part of those who now petitioned and voted against the measure;—all this is what no one, on simply reading the protest, would at all suspect, or would conceive to be credible.†

Considering what lessons are furnished, not only by all history, but by almost every one's ordinary experience, in which we so often have presented to us only a choice of evils, it is really wonderful that so many intelligent persons should, preca-

* See *Thoughts on a Proposed Grant to a Roman Catholic Seminary.*

† See *Elements of Logic*, book iii. § 17; 'Fallacy of Objections.'

sionally, sit down satisfied that they have proved their point, when once they have shown that there are grave objections to some course, without at all noticing those that lie against every different course; or seeming at all to have thought what to answer if asked, 'What then shall we do?'

In particular, questions pertaining to religious toleration often present this choice of difficulties. If a case be such in itself as seems to justify civil disabilities on religious grounds, on the plea of self-defence against public danger, this does not at once decide the question, unless some mode be shown which does promise to obviate or lessen the danger. Suppose some one points out a danger to the Established Church, from Presbyterians and other Dissenters, who overthrew, in Charles the First's time, the Constitution in Church and State, or from Roman Catholics, as owning allegiance to a foreign Power, he may be asked, would you then exclude them from office, leaving them the elective franchise? This system has been tried, and with very ill success. Would you, then, exclude them from *all* civil rights? All History, from that of the Helots of Lacedemon, to that of the Christian subjects of the Turk at this day, shows, that subjects who are not regarded as citizens are a source of weakness and peril to every empire. Would you, then, endeavour to bring them into conformity by penal laws? Our own experience forbids a repetition of that experiment. Or, lastly, would you propose, as was done in Spain to the Moors and

Jews, the alternative of conformity or banishment? If such a course would be wise and right, is it practicable? Or, is there any other that you *can* suggest, which will not leave us in the condition alluded to in the Roman Proverb, 'Lupum auribus teneo?' when it is difficult and hazardous to keep one's hold, and eminently hazardous to let go.

Dr. Copleston's views on such points generally, he set forth in a pamphlet published in 1810, in answer to a Mr. Croker, who had assailed him for supporting Lord Grenville as candidate for the Chancellorship. 'It is for the good of the *Whole*, that places of trust and power are made, and with a view to that good they ought to be filled. To claim admission into them on any other ground, is to exalt the interest of the individual above that of the State. Still, it is an undisputed maxim of English Government, that an equal participation of civil rights shall be enjoyed by all ranks and persuasions, as far as is consistent with the public good. The imposition, therefore, or the relaxation of these disabilities, will ever be a varying and not a fundamental rule of policy. It must be always *relative* to the circumstances of the times. Unless this position were admitted, with what conscience could we carry up an Address to the Throne, talking of the *wisdom of our forefathers* who imposed restraints on Catholics, and yet expressing satisfaction at the *repeal of the greatest part of them* within the present reign? Does not this very statement contain the principle for which I am contending? I do not dispute that these laws were proofs of the wisdom of our forefathers; but to

make that wisdom our beacon and sole guide in matters of *temporary policy*, after circumstances have changed, appears to me a much stronger proof of the folly of their posterity.'—(Pp. 14, 15 of *Letter to Mr. Croker.*)

On the subject of the marriage-laws, I have not any letters of the Bishop's preserved; nor am I certain whether I ever received any. But his opinion in favour of an alteration, is well known. Some of my readers may, perhaps, not be aware, that, when a Bill was brought in simply to ratify certain past marriages, a clause was inserted, subsequently, in its passage through the Upper House, which the other House assented to, expressly nullifying such marriages for the future. Whether this prohibition was to be construed as extending to marriages with a deceased wife's sister (a case of which the Act makes no express mention) was for a good while a matter of legal doubt; and very able lawyers decidedly maintained the negative. At length, however, a decision was given by a judge, in the affirmative, and is, I suppose, not likely now to be reversed.

What the Bishop's opinion was as to the *propriety* of such marriages, I am not certain. But of this I do feel certain, that he never would have regarded *that* question—which is the only one usually discussed—as the real question at issue. He was always most decidedly opposed to that *over-governing* system which would enjoin by law everything that men ought

to do, and enact legal prohibitions of everything that is unadvisable. While he would have been ready, I have no doubt, to dissuade any friend who should have consulted him, from a marriage in which there was an excessive disparity of age, or of station, or some taint of hereditary disease, he would, nevertheless, have opposed the enacting of a *law* to regulate the age and the social condition, and the state of bodily health, of all who should be allowed to marry. It ought not to be inferred that one who objects to sumptuary laws, prescribing what dress and diet each person shall use, is therefore necessarily an advocate for extravagant luxury; or that if he is against introducing the curfew, he can be no friend to early hours. Men ought to be allowed to judge and to act, as they themselves think fit, except where it can be shown (as in many cases it can be) that some serious public evil would result, or that some public benefit would be obtained by a restriction, sufficient to overbalance the evil of that restriction itself. The burden of proof clearly lies on those who advocate the introduction, or the continuance, of any limitation of liberty.

I myself have accordingly always declined (and his principle always coincided, on this point, with mine) to join issue in the question as to the advisableness of such marriages; the proper question being, whether a sufficiently strong case of public inconvenience can be made out to justify a legal prohibition.

I know not what was his opinion of the interpretations (very forced and 'non-natural' as they appear to me) which have been given of the Mosaic Law as

to this point, by those who have dragged the Pentateuch into this controversy. But I am certain that he, in *common with the very persons* who have appealed to what they call 'the divine law,' in this matter, never considered the ceremonial or the civil regulations of the Levitical Code as binding on *us*. No one considers himself bound by that, to abstain from the forbidden meats, or from selling land in perpetuity, or to require any one to marry his brother's widow. Nay, even what are confessedly *moral* duties, no Christian Legislature has felt bound in all cases to enforce by its own laws. Disobedience to parents, for instance, and gluttony and drunkenness, no one would deny to be moral offences; and yet no Legislature denounces against them the penalty of *death*.

The whole, therefore, of the appeal to the Mosaic Law is manifestly irrelevant, even on the showing of the very persons who have got up this topic of declamation; for the purpose, apparently, of diverting attention from the real points at issue.

The civil and the ceremonial Ordinances of that Law can thus far, and only thus far, be taken as a guide; namely, that anything which is not merely permitted, but distinctly enjoined, in the Law, cannot be at variance with the immutable principles of morality. If, for instance, the marriage of a brother and sister-in-law had been in itself an incestuous union, it would never have been (as it is) enjoined in a certain case by the inspired law-giver.

And as for the appeals which some have made to Canons, and Decrees, &c. of some ancient Councils and

Churches on the subject, one cannot but think these must have been designed to captivate unthinking and ill-informed hearers, and had no weight at all in the minds of those who resorted to such an argument; and who must have known (which some of their hearers probably did not) that similar authorities might be brought forward against *second marriages* of the clergy, against the marriage of *cousins*, &c.

The only argument that really does bear on the question at issue,—that is, that alleges a supposed public evil sufficient to justify and call for a legal prohibition,—is one which the Bishop must have regarded (judging from the conclusion he arrived at) as either inapplicable, or insufficient. It is urged that, if such marriages were legal, the comfort of many families would be destroyed, by its being rendered impossible for a sister-in-law to undertake, without occasioning scandal, the superintendence of a widower's household, and the care of his children.

To this it has been answered, first, that experience has proved the contrary; for that no such effect did result during that long series of years, before the Act was passed, when such marriages (though liable to be set aside by a law which was seldom or never enforced) did very frequently take place between most respectable persons, without any scandal being thence created. And no one can say that during that period such scandal could have been prevented by the mere *contingent* nullity as it may be called—the voidableness—of a marriage between brother and sister-

in-law, when no one could regard this as a thing quite out of the question, unheard of, and impossible.

Now these are matters which are decided not by enactments passed by a parliamentary majority, but by public opinion and national customs. The idea of anything being MADE UNNATURAL BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT, and perhaps again, a few years after, made natural and creditable by another Act, and again unnatural in a subsequent Session,—such an idea is worthy of Canute's courtiers, who pretended that the regal power could control the tide.

Long experience, therefore, it is urged, has proved the groundlessness of the apprehension. And it is urged, secondly, that there is *more* ground for the apprehension on the *opposite* side. For, when marriage is made illegal between parties who—as experience has amply proved—are likely to feel that kind of attachment which would naturally lead to marriage, then, their living together in very familiar and constant intercourse might be attended with suspicion; since no one could be certain that they might not feel that mutual attachment which would prove to them a source of temptation.

But suppose, on the other hand, such marriages legal, no such suspicion could arise against any even tolerably respectable persons; since it would always be supposed that if they felt inclined to marry, they would do so. None but the lowest outcast of society would ever be suspected of living by choice

with his deceased wife's sister as a concubine, when he had it in his power to make her his wife.

And accordingly a case has been adduced, which, probably, was one out of many, of a female who wished to reside with her widowed brother-in-law, but was deterred by the fear of scandal in the existing state of the law.

Whether the Bishop, however, regarded the arguments urged in favour of the law as operating in the contrary direction, or merely as insufficient, I cannot say with certainty.

The same principle of non-interference with individual liberty, where no necessity can be proved, applies equally to another case, that of the declaration 'on the true faith of a Christian' required by members of Parliament. I never would consent to join issue on the question, the only one usually discussed, whether a Jew, or any one else not professing Christianity, should sit in the House of Commons; because I regard that as a question which should be left, in each particular case, to the decision of the *electors*. ' Any one of those who should be disposed, (as I myself should be,) to give a preference to a candidate who was not only a professed Christian, but one whom he believed to be a sincere Christian, and, moreover, a sound member of our Church, would be perfectly consistent in wishing to allow others the same freedom which he claims for himself. The electors should be left to choose, unrestricted, the

representative they themselves prefer, except when it can be shown that some public danger would arise from leaving them thus unfettered.

Now, in the present case, nothing of this kind was even alleged. The topics urged were the indecorum and anomaly of allowing a Jew to obtain a seat in an Assembly which legislates for our Church; which (great though it be) is certainly no greater anomaly than the admission of Roman Catholics and Dissenters; and, again, the 'indifference to Christianity,' which, it was said, we should manifest if we should thus 'unchristianize' the Legislature. But those who urge this topic seem to have forgotten, first, that they have already, in this sense, 'unchristianized' the *constituency*, by allowing to Jews, &c., the elective franchise; and, secondly, that if removing Jewish disabilities implies indifference to *Christianity*, by the same rule, the non-exclusion of Roman Catholics and Dissenters must imply indifference to our *Church*. If the one is to '*unchristianize*' the Legislature, the other must, no less, '*unprotestantize*' or 'unchurch' it. A man may advocate the removal of *all* religious disabilities, consistently, and on an intelligible principle, quite distinct from universal religious indifferrence; but to retain *some*, by way of proclaiming that he is not indifferent, and yet to allow the removal of others, is plainly to proclaim indifference as to the latter. And if this conclusion is to be avoided, it can only be by retracing our steps, and restoring the test-laws.

This reasoning is so simple and obvious, that, in

a late debate, it was admitted on the opposite side. But then, it was urged in reply, that we ought not, in such a case, to be guided by strict logical deductions, but lay aside the use of our reasoning faculty, and arrive at a conclusion independently of the clearest proofs on the other side.

'When reason is against a man,' said Hobbes, 'he will be against reason.' But it may always be anticipated that reason, when once men have generally understood and allowed on which side it lies, will, before long, prevail. Error on any point may, indeed, bear rule for an indefinite time, while undetected; but when its real character is fully known, the days of its reign are numbered. Not that its practical overthrow is, even then, *immediate*. Sound principles must not only be brought into notice, and clearly explained, but must afterwards be allowed some *time* to become familiar to men's minds, before they will be acted on. The words which Shakspere puts into the mouth of Dogberry, probably in mere careless sport, may be taken as a correct description of what actually takes place in many departments of life; 'it hath been *proved* already that you are stark knaves; and it will go near to be *thought so* shortly.' Adam Smith lived to see his doctrine of free trade acknowledged to be sound by all the most intelligent men; but it was reserved for another generation to bring it into practice in legislation. The system of stocking new colonies with the sweepings of jails, after having been vainly denounced by Lord Bacon, and afterwards by Howard, was fully and unanswer-

ably exposed as indefensible about a quarter of a century ago; and at length there seems reason to expect that its inexpediency will before long be generally and practically admitted. 'It hath been proved already that the system is utterly bad; and it will go near to be thought so shortly.'

On the present question, though differing from the Bishop on the whole, I fully concurred with him on one important point—in his objection to the patchwork-legislation, as it may be called, which has been repeatedly attempted; of bringing in a Bill specifically 'for the removal of Jewish disabilities;' which is noticed in a letter published in the *Memoir* (p. 177), in which he says that 'the measure if entertained at all, ought to be placed upon another footing; an abolition of *all* religious qualifications for civil office.' And this is the course which I have always advocated in all that I have said and published on the subject.

The question, as far as relates to the Jews themselves, (of whom not above three or four would be likely ever to be returned to Parliament,) is admitted on all hands to be of very small importance. But both parties consider the question, and rightly, as one involving an important *principle*. Those on the one side consider the removal of all religious disabilities as implying an indifference to Christianity; not perceiving that (as has been pointed out just above), by their own rule, the law as it now stands must imply an indifference (which they do not mean to acknowledge) to Protestantism, and to their own Church. And those on the other side, regard civil

disabilities on religious grounds (when extended to those who are naturalised, and who are acknowledged to be peaceable and loyal citizens) as contrary to the will of our Divine Master, and as tending to make his a 'kingdom of this world.' They are anxious, therefore, that the removal (which surely *will* take place before long) of such disabilities, should be viewed not as a triumph *over* Christianity, but a triumph *of* sound Christian principles.

The proper course would be, not to pass 'an Act for the relief of Jews,' but to substitute (or allow to be substituted at the will of the Member claiming a seat) for the present declaration, a solemn profession of loyalty, similar to a Quaker's 'solemn affirmation.'

This would secure, as far as professions can afford any security, what is admitted to be the main object —the primary design—of the 'declaration,' which was intended to be a profession, not of orthodoxy, but of loyalty; it being only incidentally, and by what is called a side-wind, that any religious profession is implied by it.

I believe, indeed, that those (Bishop Copleston among others) who framed the present declaration, did contemplate and intend the exclusion of any persons not professing Christianity. But the far greater part of those who *passed* the existing law (and it is to *their* views, not merely to those of the *framers,* that we should look), were thinking only of removing restrictions from many who had been before excluded, and were not thinking at all of a case

which had never then occurred—the election of a Jew, or a Mussulman. This is acknowledged by nearly all, even of those who are opposed to the alteration of the present law.

Bishop Copleston, however, and most of the rest who framed the declaration in question, would probably have attached little importance now, to the introduction of the word 'Christian,' if at least they were aware how fashionable it has become among a certain transcendental school, to profess a belief in Christianity, themselves explaining their meaning to be, that Jesus Christ was a divine messenger in the same sense that Socrates, and Confucius, and Mahomet, and Oliver Cromwell, and all other eminent men may be called such;—that the Gospel-narrative is partly true history, and partly Myth;—and that our Scriptures contain much valuable matter, mixed up with much that is absurd or pernicious.

I am not speaking, it is to be observed, of hypocritical pretenders;—of men who profess what they do not believe. Against such, no one could have thought of securing us by any form of declaration. But the persons I am speaking of, are such as frankly and without disguise explain what they mean when they call themselves Christians; which is evidently something that falls much more short than Judaism does, of Christianity properly and usually so called.

On this subject I will take leave to extract a passage from the *Cautions for the Times*, No. 29, p. 498; the whole of which Number, I may be

allowed, as I am not myself the writer of it, to characterize as one of the most masterly compositions in our language. 'No man has a right to call himself a Christian, if he be not a Christian in the ordinary acceptation of the word—if he do not, for example, believe that Jesus Christ really rose from the dead, according to the Scriptures. This common acceptation of the term Christian will indeed include many who hold what appear to us very false notions of Christianity—as, for instance, the Unitarians. But we must take language as we find it. The true meaning of a word is *what is commonly understood* by it; neither more nor less. And to go on any other ground would involve us in difficulties we could never get out of.

'There are—to take an obvious instance—months which are called (most absurdly as far as etymology goes) September, October, November, December. Now, would it be allowable to say, on the one hand, 'September is not, and cannot be, the name of the ninth month, because *septem* means, in Latin, not *nine, but seven?*' Or, on the other hand, "*I* mean by September what *you call January;* and I have a right to my own opinion?' So you have, it would be answered, but not to frame a new language, and call it English.

'So it is with the word Christian. We are not justified in denying that title to an Unitarian, on the ground that he denies what we hold as an essential doctrine of Christianity. Nor would a Roman-catholic be justified in refusing it to all but members of what

he regards as the only *true Church;* or a Baptist, to all except those whom he considers really baptized persons.

'But then it is still more monstrous to pretend that one who denies *all Revelation* and all divine mission of Jesus Christ, and all the miraculous facts of our Religion, can be properly styled a Christian. A Christian—whatever any one may conceive the word *ought* to mean—does mean, in ordinary speech, neither more nor less than one who regards Jesus Christ as *the founder of his religion*, and as *coming from God.* And if we were to tamper with the ordinary meaning of the word, we might at once put an end to some late political disputes, and enable not only Jews but Mahometans also, to make oath 'on the true faith of a Christian.' For, etymologically, a Jew may be called a Christian, since he believes *in a Christ* or Messiah yet to come. And Mahometans go further, for they believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah, though they do not regard Him as the Founder of their religion. Might not, then, either Jews or Mahometans take the declaration to which we have referred, with far greater consistency than those who are Christians only in the transcendental sense, of believing that Jesus of Nazareth taught, in the main, and with some blemishes, a pure and beautiful morality—that the incidents—some real and some imaginary—of his life were highly picturesque, and the circumstances of his death very touching—and that He stands in the same rank of great minds as Pythagoras, Socrates, and Confucius?

But, absurd and unjustifiable as is this misuse of language, the fact is notorious, that there are persons who do acknowledge that they mean by Christianity something quite remote from the Christian religion, in the established sense of the word, and indeed from all religion of any kind. And when this is the case, and is known to be so, a declaration 'on the true faith of a Christian,' must evidently be, as far as the religious portion of it is concerned, altogether nugatory.

On the questions that have been raised relative to the SABBATH, there is nothing of Bishop Copleston's extant in print, except a Report, in *Hansard*, of a Speech (alluded to in the *Memoir*, pp. 151–2, as a defence of an absent friend unjustly assailed) which, however, is so ill-reported as to be nearly unintelligible; though, when spoken, it was remarkably effective.*

There is also a brief Article relating to the subject, in the Common-Place Book. But I have had much conversation with him on the subject, in which our views fully coincided; and it was he who first directed my attention to some of the works noticed in my *Thoughts on the Sabbath*. No Works, indeed, of these authors, or of any other uninspired men, are any authority on questions of christian duty;

* It drew from the assailant a pretended retractation, which was in reality a repetition of the same calumny, dressed up anew, and afterwards printed and published.

but they enable us to trace the rise and progress of some prevailing opinions. All persons, indeed, even tolerably acquainted with the Bible and Prayer Book, are aware, that in neither is the Lord's Day ever called the Sabbath. But many are not aware of the extremely recent origin of what Calvin called the 'Anglican figment'—the tradition (nearly unknown for the first fifteen centuries, and more) of the commandment respecting the Sabbath having been *transferred* by the authority of the Apostles from the seventh day of the week to the first; though, even now, in all Latin documents (such as the Parliamentary proceedings), '*Dies Sabbati*' always means Saturday.*

Of course this is not the place for entering on a discussion of the questions which I have fully treated of elsewhere. I will only remark, therefore, that though I do not differ from those who maintain what are called the Sabbatarian views, as to the *duty* of observing the Lord's Day, but only as to the *grounds* of it, it is no difficult matter for an unscrupulous disputant to confound these two questions together (as was done in the debate alluded to), and thus to mislead those of his hearers (probably four-fifths of them) who have never read what I have published on the subject, and will, therefore, fail to detect the misrepresentation.

My reasons for dwelling earnestly on a point which some would regard as of no *practical* importance, I

* As, also, Sabbato in Italian, and Sabbado in Spanish.

have fully explained in the Work above alluded to. If any one, when asserting the binding authority on Christians of the fourth Commandment, means only (which is the explanation given in the book commonly called *Cranmer's Catechism*), to assert the duty, generally, of observing christian Festivals, and that the Lord's Day may be called the Sabbath, figuratively, by the same sort of analogy by which the Eucharist may be called the Passover, this is a doctrine in itself unobjectionable. But it is surely dangerous to hold, or to teach as something expedient for the influencing of the Vulgar, that a (supposed) tradition may be allowed to supersede Scripture, or that we are strictly obeying an injunction to observe the seventh day of the week *as* the seventh, and in memory of the *Creation*, by observing, instead, the *first* day *as* the first, in memory of the *Resurrection*. There is no greater or more unwarrantable liberty taken with a divine command, by the Romanists, in administering the bread without the cup, or by the Quakers, in professing to celebrate the Sacraments after discarding the material Symbols; or, in short, in any other unauthorised modification of precepts acknowledged to be binding.

Some, again, will be not unlikely to feel a *general* suspicion of the sincerity of teachers, who they will have reason to think are practising a kind of pious fraud for the supposed benefit of ignorant hearers, by inducing these to think, when they themselves know better, that the fourth Commandment is binding on Christians, and that its obligation was transferred by apostolic autho-

rity to the *first* day of the week, and to the commemoration of a different event. For he who is reasonably suspected of a pious fraud, must not wonder or complain if he finds himself doubted on points where he is really sincere. The only rational and the only safe alternative is, either to observe the fourth Commandment exactly as it was given, or else to acknowledge that this, as well as the rest of the Ceremonial Law, is not binding on Christians.

According to the Proverb which Lord Bacon has somewhere alluded to, 'Nettle-*roots*' sting not. The first entrance of some false principle, or of some usurped power, is generally in reference to something either harmless, or else unimportant; and when the *root* has once got possession of the soil, it will afterwards send up stronger and stronger shoots. Thus, the claims of Papal Rome originated in the natural deference felt for the Church of an imperial City, and a disposition to consult that Church on various questions that arose. And when this had grown into an established custom, and the decisions of Rome, when right, or when relating to matters of minor consequence, were appealed to as decisive, the thin end had been inserted of the wedge which was gradually driven in further, till at length the Pope came to be regarded as Christ's Vicegerent on earth.

It would not be right, I think, to leave altogether unnoticed the part taken by the Bishop on that memorable occasion, the attack made on Dr. Hamp-

den when appointed Regius Professor of Divinity. It will not be necessary, however, to enter here on any complete narrative of the facts, or any full discussion of the questions connected with that extraordinary transaction; more especially as I have already done this in an Address to my own Clergy some years ago,* on the occasion of a fresh attack made on Dr. Hampden when he was elevated to the Bench. But Bishop Copleston's open and prompt declaration that he saw no grounds whatever for the imputation of heterodoxy which had been cast on Dr. Hampden, deserves to be recorded as presenting so strong a contrast, as unhappily it does, to the conduct of very many others.

Dr. Hampden, as most of my readers are probably aware, after having gained the highest distinctions the University has to bestow, and filled the most important offices in it, gave great offence to several of its members, by the publication of a pamphlet advocating the admissibility (as in the University of Dublin) of persons not members of the Established Church. The displeasure this caused was so great that a person whom the late Lord Melbourne, then Premier, consulted as to the appointment of a Professor, thought himself bound, after setting forth the eminent qualifications of Dr. Hampden, to warn his Lordship that the appointment of him would be anything but popular at Oxford.

Lord Melbourne, however, resolved to disregard

* *The Church and the Universities.*

this; and as soon as the appointment was announced, an outbreak ensued to which the history of this country can hardly furnish a parallel. A number of persons (several of whom have since joined the Church of Rome), professing emphatically 'Church-principles,' assembled in a kind of self-constituted synod, and denounced a brother-minister of their own Church as heretical;* and ultimately induced the Oxford Convocation to pass a vote which there is strong reason to believe was utterly illegal, though the apprehension of ruinous expenses prevented the question being brought to trial.

Their charge was directed against Dr. Hampden's Bampton Lectures, which had been delivered three years before—which had been two years published—which had obtained very high and general approba-

* Of the party which at that time was just beginning to be organised under the guidance of a certain band of 'conspirators' (this is the term applied to them *by one of their own number*), the course has always been, (1) to profess excessive submission to the authority of the *Church*, and veneration for Bishops; who were thus likely to be deceived into the belief that this Party would prove a faithful and obedient, though perhaps somewhat over-zealous supporter; (2) to represent the Church as consisting of *themselves* and their adherents; coming forward on various occasions (as lately, in reference to Bishop Gobat) in an unauthorised and irregular manner, to pronounce decisions where they were not entitled to any jurisdiction; and (3) to treat all their brother-ministers, and especially all bishops, who did not agree with them, sometimes with utter neglect, and sometimes with the grossest insolence. (See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 17, p. 328. See, also, *The Church and the Universities*, second edition.) They remind one of Addison's 'Tory Freeholder,' who declared, 'I am for passive obedience and non-resistance; and I will oppose to the utmost any Ministry and any King that will not maintain that doctrine.'

tion, and against which no specific charge had ever been brought (nor has been to this day) before either the Bishop of the Diocese or the University-authorities expressly appointed to take cognizance of such complaints. Moreover, he had in that interval been appointed to the Headship of Mary Hall by the Chancellor, without the least hint of an objection; and had been elected Professor of Moral Philosophy, an office which is in the appointment of certain Functionaries in the University, of whom several, two years after, took the lead in the censures passed on the very publication for which they had themselves applauded and rewarded him!

And a person of high station in the Church, in passing through Oxford, called at Dr. Hampden's rooms at Mary-Hall, with an apology for introducing himself, for the purpose, as he said, of thanking him, on his own behalf, and that of the Church, for his valuable services in producing so excellent a work; the very work which that same person, within two years after, fiercely denounced as heterodox.

When, on a late occasion, the highest Authorities of the Church of Rome in Ireland publicly denounced as heterodox, books which had been deliberately sanctioned and recommended for the use of schools, by equally high Authorities of the same Church, and which had been many years in use under that sanction by thousands of their Communion,* this was naturally regarded as a most extraordinary piece of

* See *Address on the Proceedings of the Education Board*, 1853.

effrontery. But still, it was not the very *same individuals* that gave these opposite decisions. The change took place, indeed, in a Church which boasts of being unchangeable, but not in the individual members of it. The case now before us, therefore, goes a step even beyond this.

I purposely abstain from mentioning the names of the persons concerned in those most extraordinary transactions relating to Dr. Hampden; unless, indeed, I should be challenged to verify facts, which I should be easily able to do, and, therefore, do not expect that I shall be so called on. And I should be unwilling in any way to stir up the embers of any bye-gone and forgotten contest. But this is unhappily very far from being such. The acts into which the University—especially that portion of it consisting of the non-residents—was then led (and which have *never* been to this day formally rescinded), gave a most effective and powerful stimulus to that Tract-party, whose principles have since spread so widely, and struck such deep root, and are bearing such abundant fruits.

A letter of mine to Bishop Copleston on this subject, written at the time, is now before me; from which I will take the liberty of here inserting an extract, as serving to show how distinctly most of the consequences which have since taken place were foreseen nearly twenty years ago.

'Of the condition of the Church, I am sorry to say I cannot take a cheering view. It is injured and endangered, not only by enemies from without, but,

much more, by its own members. Open enemies can seldom effect anything, at the very worst, except against its outward worldly prosperity; but its own members endanger it not only as an *endowed establishment*, but as a *Christian society*.

'And the worst of it is, that none go so far in striking at the very root of all discipline, and of all church-unity, and even of the very existence of the Society, as those who are emphatically styled high-churchmen; who declaim the most loudly against schism, and profess to pay more reverence than most Protestants would allow, to church-authority, and church-tradition. Yet these are the very men who, as if they gloried in inconsistency, go the greatest lengths in schismatical proceedings.

'And, then, they complain that the Church is despised, and is in danger. Well it may be, when they exhibit the spectacle of its being trampled on by the very men who profess themselves its most zealous advocates. For instance, what sort of effect is likely to have been produced in the public mind by the late proceedings at Oxford in reference to Hampden? I will suppose the whole matter viewed by unlearned men, of plain common sense, who may not think of disputing the point whether Hampden's doctrine is as unsound as it has been represented. Without pretending to decide any deep theological question, they must perceive that any such question ought to be (as far as the Church is concerned) decided *by* the Church; by the Bishop, or the Archbishop, or by *some* sort or other of regular eccle-

siastical authority; not by any individual or any number of individuals; taking upon themselves to be accuser, witness, judge, jury, and executioner, all in one; and, by their own *self-constituted* authority, to denounce and stigmatise a brother-clergyman. I am supposing Hampden to be just what these men represent him. If, then, there is nowhere any constituted Authority competent to take cognizance of this charge,—no ecclesiastical tribunal of any kind to pass a regular censure on a grave ecclesiastical offence, it is plain the Church is a mere empty name, and is no Society at all. But if there *be* any such ecclesiastical Authority, it is equally plain that those who utterly set it at nought, and not only *neglect*, but *refuse*, when called upon, to make any application to such Authority, are sapping the very foundation of the Society.

'When Luddites, or Rockites, or Whitefeet, or Trades-unionists, or any other self-constituted Combination, take upon themselves to pronounce judgment, and to execute it, or any of their neighbours, setting at nought all lawful authorities, every one sees that, even if any individual they punish should be really deserving of punishment at the hands of the magistrate, still, they are not the less striking at the very root of social order. They are not merely, like thieves and other wrong-doers, disturbing the peace and welfare of society; but they are destroying society itself.

'And so it must be with a religious or any other society. The conduct of the Corinthians, whom Paul censures so strongly for banding together in parties to

excommunicate their brethren, went to subvert the Corinthian Church. Our Church, accordingly, besides insisting strongly, in the Ordination-vow, and on the duty of submission to the Church authorities, and of endeavouring to preserve 'peace and quietness,' has also enacted a Canon against 'public opposition between preachers;' a Canon which might seem almost superfluous, as being *implied in the very existence* of a Church. It adverts, you will remember, to the manifold evils resulting from public contests, and passes a censure on any one who, in the pulpit '*or otherwise*' (as, for instance, in pamphlets or other printed papers), shall presume to denounce as heretical a sermon delivered by any other preacher. And the Ordinary is directed to take cognizance of any such proceeding, and to permit neither party to preach 'pendente lite.'

'The spirit of this Canon is implied in the very existence of a society. Any plain Christian, without pretending to deep theological learning, may perceive that a 'kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.'

'If a clergyman, accordingly, in my diocese should presume to denounce publicly another clergyman as teaching doctrines essentially at variance with those of the Church, I should feel at once that they ought not, *both* of them, to continue ministers of the Church; but, before I proceeded to investigate the charge, I should, in the first instance, severely reprimand the author of it for not having brought his complaint before me; and for having done his utmost, in disre-

gard of his Ordination-vow, to set at nought the authority he had sworn to reverence, and to introduce discord and schism, in place of 'quietness, peace, and unity.' And I should point out to him, that any one who openly quits the Church and becomes a Dissenter, even on grounds that I might think frivolous, is acting a far less schismatical, and a more ingenuous and more consistent part than one who remains in the Church to throw contempt on its Authorities, and to sow dissension among its members.

'Of this character, I need not remind you, were the late proceedings at Oxford. When, after two or three years from the delivery of Hampden's sermons, the heresy of them was discovered, on his becoming obnoxious to a particular *academical* and political party, on an *academical* question, there issued forth a stream of pamphlets and protests, and newspaper attacks, denouncing him as at variance with the Church of which he was a minister; all the authors of them studiously avoiding any kind of reference to any ecclesiastical tribunal,—to any Church-authority. On the basis of this 'public opposition between preachers' rested all the subsequent steps taken by the University. Now, supposing all that was said against Hampden to be true, and to have been expressed in the most christian-like and gentleman-like manner, it is evident the whole proceeding is in the highest degree schismatical, and subversive of Church-authority; if, at least, there be any such thing as schism, and any such thing as a Church.

'I do not mean to impute such *designs* to all who

joined in these transactions. I am aware that in such cases there are always two classes of men concerned, the misleaders and the misled. But alas, that so many hundreds of the clergy should be of the latter class, if not of the former! That those who by their office should be instructors of the ignorant and guides to the blind, should so conduct themselves that the *best* one can say of them is, that they know not what they do, and are made the servile tools of factious schismatics! Too late, I fear, will they discover that in their eagerness to stigmatise an obnoxious individual, and embarrass an abhorred Ministry, they have been affronting the Church, and endangering both it and the University to a far greater degree than any avowed enemy could have done.'

The effects of the Tract-party had previously been but feeble and unsuccessful. Dr. Hampden's Bampton Lectures had indeed been attacked in a pamphlet, entitled *The Foundations of the Faith assailed at Oxford*, written by a person who has since made manifest *what* faith he had in his mind by openly joining the Church of Rome; but it attracted little notice.

When, however, a great number of persons had been led to believe that the real object of the movement was some heterodoxy (which they took upon trust), in those Bampton Lectures, and that they were doing good service to the Church in joining to hunt down the author, it naturally followed that a large

portion of them *continued* to place full confidence in those whom they had observed to be the leaders in this crusade. And accordingly they listened favourably to the Tracts which soon after were poured forth with such rapidity, and with so much art; and were led on, step by step, to adopt such tenets as they would originally have shrunk from in dismay.

Many others, however, who had at first eagerly welcomed as fellow-labourers in a good cause those that were especially active against Dr. Hampden, perceived, rather too late, what kind of auxiliaries they had called in. And then they earnestly, but not very successfully, endeavoured to put down that party which they had themselves fostered into strength and popularity. The little birds—according to the proverb—which are vainly chasing about the full-grown cuckoo, had themselves reared it as a nestling.

I could not avoid making some reference to this painful subject, because, else it might have seemed almost a disparagement to a man of the Bishop's high character, to mention, as a matter of commendation, that he publicly declared the conviction he felt, of the soundness of Dr. Hampden's theology. This—some one might say—is no more than mere common honesty. But the occasion was one in which men were liable to be deterred—as many in fact were—by the fear of obloquy, from taking that straightforward course.

And, accordingly, among the countless pamphlets on the subject which appeared at that time, there was one,—a letter to Lord Melbourne,—which, referring

to Bishop Copleston's declared opinion of Dr. Hampden's work, expressed a conviction that he could never have read it!

It was rather startling, and seemed to indicate no very high tone of moral sentiment, to find such an imputation thrown out against a person of unblemished integrity; and that, too, with the air of one not intending any reproach. But it should be observed, that of those who did join in condemning Dr. Hampden as heterodox, a very large majority had, notoriously and confessedly, never read his book. And a verdict of *acquittal* without evidence, is at least one degree less worthy of abhorrence than a verdict of *condemnation* of a man unheard.

Such was the tone of morality which was at that time tolerated, and prevalent, in a Christian land!

From the Tract-party itself the Bishop appears to have entertained for some time much less serious apprehensions than experience afterwards showed there was ground for. He seems to have thought, in common with many other intelligent men, that there was little or nothing in the whole of that movement beyond some fanciful speculations in theory, which would soon cease to have attraction for any one, and, in practice, a mere puerile attachment to martinet formalities. And, accordingly, in a letter (printed in the *Memoir*, p. 486) of the date of 1844, he speaks of 'that folly being on the wane.' At that very time, however, the principles of the Tracts were more and more developing themselves, and spreading daily wider

through the Church, and striking deeper and deeper root.

But I have found it to be the policy of many of the most subtle members of that party, to represent that there *had been* indeed some extravagances, which were now, however, abandoned; that there had been a danger, but that it was now nearly blown over, and that all would soon come right, &c. And this language was often echoed by well-disposed men, and not wanting in intelligence, who had been themselves lulled by such arts into a dangerous security; like the Trojans of the poet, who flattered themselves that the Grecian host had finally departed, when it was lying concealed hard by, and was just about to capture their city.

Although, however, the Bishop did, for a time (in common with many others), under-rate greatly the extent of the prevalence of Tractite-principles, and was not, at first, fully aware of the real character of those principles, he never wavered at all in his judgment as to the points themselves that were at issue, nor hesitated to declare his convictions.

'The double doctrine,'—the suppression, or 'reserve,' as it is called, of the fundamental truths of Christianity, as a secret to be imparted only to a select few, and to be kept back from the great mass of Christians;—the exalting of human traditions, practically, to a level with the inspired writings;—the conferring on Christian ministers the character of 'sacerdotal' [hieratical] priests, offering sacrifices on behalf of the People; these, and several other points

appertaining to the controversy between the Tract-party and their opponents, we often discussed together, both in conversation and in writing. On all these points I do not recollect that there was ever any material difference in our views. And my readers will have already seen how far I am from wishing to suppress those of his opinions which did differ from my own.

It happened at a time when he was Provost, and I a Fellow of our College, a good many years before the Tract-party arose, that the preacher of a university-sermon, in advocating the necessity of a regularly-appointed Christian-ministry, was hurried away by an inconsiderate zeal, into an expression savouring of Romanism. 'Every sacrifice,' he said, 'required a Priest; and the Christian sacrifice (he was speaking of the Eucharist) must, therefore, require a Christian Priest.' I was so much scandalised at this doctrine, that I immediately told the Provost I could not think the matter ought to pass unnoticed; especially as it was understood that the sermon was to be published, thereby involving the University, apparently at least, in some degree of responsibility. To have waited for two years (as Dr. Hampden's opponent did) after the publication, without making any remonstrance, and then to have assembled a self-constituted synod of private individuals, and denounced the preacher as heterodox, would have been a mode of proceeding not at all consonant to my ideas of propriety, and would have been, at *that* time, *unprecedented*.

Dr. Copleston fully concurred in my view of the

subject, but being unwilling to cause an agitation, if it could be well avoided, in the public mind, by at once bringing a charge of heterodoxy before the regular tribunal, he wrote a private note to the preacher, stating how much offence had been given (and as he thought, reasonably,) by that passage of his sermon. He received a reply, thanking him for the admonition, and promising that the passage should be (as it accordingly was) entirely expunged.

On another occasion, an article on Priestcraft having appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, in which the writer, ostensibly attacking the Braminical religion, but evidently applying, with some ingenuity, all that he says, to every religion, including the Christian, represents all as the offspring of priestcraft, I was induced to allude to these views, in a discourse delivered before the University, on the 5th of November, and since published. In this, I set forth what has always appeared to me the correct view of the Christian-ministry, thus converting all that is said about priestcraft, from an argument *against* Christianity into a powerful evidence *for* it; inasmuch, it is the *only* religion that had (at the time when it was introduced) no sacrificing priest (sacerdos, or hiereus) on Earth; and is such, consequently, as Man would never have devised.

This discourse was submitted to Dr. Copleston, who fully concurred in the views there taken.

These views I have since set forth and enlarged on, in various publications; among others, in the volume of Essays on the *Kingdom of Christ*,

which he noticed with approbation in a letter (published in the *Memoir*, p. 194), wherein he says, 'I have now finished your fourth edition of the *Kingdom of Christ*, which strikes me as the most valuable, at the present time, of all your publications, because it goes to the bottom of those questions which divide members of our Church, &c.' And a little further on, he says, 'I agree with you entirely as to the false notion entertained by many of our own Church, of the Apostolical succession, —the transmission of a mysterious virtue from one individual to another.' This latter passage is printed with a note by the Editor, saying, 'this will not be understood as denying that a sacramental character attaches to Ordination.' I cannot but think, however, that it *will* be so understood; because a reader will naturally conclude a writer's meaning to be just what his words express in their simple, ordinary, and obvious sense, except when some other passage from the same writer is produced, showing that his opinion was something different. And in the present case there is none such cited; nor did I ever see or hear any expression of his that could lead me to think he regarded Ordination as a Sacrament, or at all objected to the natural and obvious sense of what is said on the subject in our 25th Article.

While I am on this subject, I ought not to omit adverting to a most important transaction in which the Bishop took a prominent part; more especially as it was the last matter of any consequence (apart

from the mere routine duties of office) in which he was concerned.

A letter was addressed to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford by a prelate of our Church, inquiring whether it was to be understood that the University sanctioned the educating of young men in such doctrines, and such principles, as were set forth in a recent work called *The Ideal of a Church;* and if not, whether it ought to be allowed that those intrusted with the business of education should openly inculcate these Romish tenets, teaching their disciples at the same time, both by precept and example, to subscribe to the formularies of our Church 'in a non-natural sense.' 'If such a state of things (it was urged) is to be permitted to continue, it must follow that an Oxford-degree would be regarded by Bishops applied to for Ordination, not as a recommendation of a candidate, but rather as a presumption against his soundness, and a reason for calling on him to clear himself from suspicion. And allusion was made to a case which had occurred a good many years ago, when a tract inculcating Atheism having been traced to certain individuals, they were immediately expelled. Now the existing case, it was observed, was a much stronger one. For the doctrines of the book in question are as decidedly opposed to those of the English Church, as those of Atheism; and they are incomparably more dangerous, as being more likely to make converts. The tone of morality also is far lower than that of the Atheistical tract; for the writers of that did not advise men to feign belief,

and to subscribe to formularies in 'a non-natural sense.'

And above all, being only undergraduates, not Fellows and College-tutors, their influence was likely to be comparatively insignificant, and their extravagances did not near so much involve the character of the University.

Soon after the transmission of this letter, whether in consequence of it or not, the matter was taken up by the University.

By a vote of Convocation, carried by a very large majority, a censure was passed on Mr. Ward's book. And by another vote, carried, however, by a smaller majority, he was deprived of his Degree. But he was still allowed to remain a member of the University; and did so, I believe, till the time of his open secession to the Church of Rome.

It is my own belief (as I have already said), and that of the most intelligent and best-informed persons with whom I have conversed, that the terrible conflicts which took place then, and on some other occasions, at Oxford, were in no small degree occasioned by the original attack made on Dr. Hampden through the encouragement thus afforded to the Tract-party; whose audacity could hardly have reached such a pitch, but for that early encouragement. Those who, like the horse in the fable, seeking aid against his enemy the stag, had allowed an insidious ally to mount, and to put his bit into their mouth, found it afterwards no easy matter to unseat him. The Convocation which censured Dr. Hampden

'sowed the wind,' and their successors 'reaped the whirlwind.'

The cause of the majority being so much smaller for the degradation of Mr. Ward than for the censure, was, that very many persons thought *expulsion* without *degradation* would have been the appropriate sentence. A man of nice feelings of honour, they observed, would *spontaneously* withdraw from the University, or any other Church of England Body, as soon as he found that he could not conscientiously adhere to the principles, or the system, of that Church. And any one thus opposed to the Church, who, being of less delicate feelings, fails so to withdraw, ought to be removed from the Body by its own act.

This is the view which I laid before the Bishop, (who had taken a prominent and most zealous part in the proceedings alluded to,) as accounting for a course which some had been disposed to attribute to lukewarmness.

On this subject he says to me (in a letter written at the time), 'I agree with you entirely as to the degradation instead of the expulsion of Ward:' and, again, in another, 'My opinion about the Oxford affair is soon told. They ought to have expelled Ward, and condemned Tract 90. But the times are rotten;' &c.

This was in answer to a letter of mine, urging, in vindication of those who had voted against the degradation, that they considered such a sentence, instead of expulsion, as placing the University in a false

position; 'implying that a man who, from being hostile to the Church, was disqualified for being a *graduate*, might still be allowed to be a member; though no officer in the Army would be, for *treason*, reduced *to the ranks*, but either acquitted, or dismissed.'

In a letter about the same time, I alluded to his *Charge* of 1845 (from which some extracts are given in the *Memoir*, p. 249), then lately published, observing, 'You will have done good service by this timely public protest against Tractism. The alarm which the recent *open* secessions from the Church have excited, offers, I think, a fitting opportunity for warning men against the more insidious remnants of 'Catiline's' conspirators who have not yet left the city.' As for those who have spoken out at last, and whom I should have considered as at least honest if they had seceded to Rome ten years earlier, one may apply to them a passage of Demosthenes, which I remember reading with you forty years ago; 'those who now took the liberty to utter their real sentiments (ὧν ἐφρονοῦν λαβόντας ἄδειαν), we regarded as having been enemies indeed, long since, but then, *open* enemies.'

'The whole phenomenon of Tractism is, indeed, as you observe (in p. 20, of the *Charge*), one which some years ago no one could have anticipated. But how many there were who did not anticipate it even when actually begun, and when my lamented friend, Bishop Dickinson, clearly pointed it out, in that

pamphlet reprinted in the volume which I sent you.* My remarks on the subject, in the additions to the Introduction to the first Series of Essays (which I sent you some weeks ago), were published before Newman's secession; which, however, was then anticipated.'

The whole subject of the Tract-movement is of such high importance, and an importance which, so far from being on the wane, is daily increasing, that I thought it would not be doing justice to the Bishop's memory to omit putting on record his views as to the several points at issue. And for this reason I subjoin some extracts (to which more might have been added, of similar tone) from a few more of his letters to me. 'You ask me,' he says, in a letter of December, 1843, 'what I thought were Newman's motives for resigning St. Mary's. I can only guess, that he found he had gone too far to retract; that 'returning were as bad as going over;' and that he is prepared to take this the only honest course. I want to see the poison brought to a head, and expelled from the system.'

In the same letter, he notices a printed paper sent over from New York, relative to the ordination there of a person against whom a protest had been made, on account of his having professed tenets such as are advocated in some of the *Tracts for the Times*. 'As to the New York affair,' he writes, 'I had the

* *Remains of Bishop Dickinson*, edited by Dr. West.

statement of Drs. Anthon and Smith sent to me some time in August or September. I read it through with attention, and, I may add, with astonishment; astonishment that such a case as Cary's ordination could have been sanctioned, not only by an American bishop, but by the majority of the Presbytery who assisted him. I read it a second time, and marked certain passages, which, if unrefuted, seemed to me decisive of the point that the American Episcopal Church is no longer Protestant, but Popish. You have put this in a demonstrative form, with your usual perspicuity and force. I thought, indeed, that some proceedings must soon be had in their Convocation, on the subject; and I entertained a hope that the ordination would be condemned by a Council, and the Bishop censured. Since that time it had gone out of my mind. * * * * I rejoice, however, that you have taken up this matter, and that you write to Dr. McVickar as a friend. He will, at least, give you some authentic information as to the state of opinion and feeling in their Church, and the measures likely to be taken in consequence.'

It may be necessary here to explain that the letter to Dr. McVickar, alluded to by the Bishop, and of which I had sent him a copy, was one of inquiry respecting that ordination against which Drs. Anthon and Smith had protested, and at which Dr. McVickar had assisted. As I had several times permitted American clergymen to preach in this diocese, I felt bound officially to make this inquiry, that I might judge how far this could safely and properly be done.

The answer I received was very brief, treating the matter slightly, and offering no explanation or vindication of the transaction. This answer I communicated,—with a remark on the absence of vindication, —to one of the American bishops with whom I was acquainted; and who afterwards made it public, (along with other documents,) as a proof that no defence had been offered of the proceeding complained of.

I received no further direct communication from Dr. McVickar; but an Article with his name appeared in an American newspaper, charging me with a breach of confidence, in giving publicity to a *private* and confidential letter—a letter of introduction sent by a friend, in which he had *incidentally* mentioned the transaction in question. This statement, however, he qualified by saying, 'if I recollect rightly,' or words to that effect. But this statement, of whose accuracy he did not even profess to feel certain, yet on which he founded a most severe censure, is *totally unfounded!*

I did indeed receive from him a letter of introduction sent by a private friend previously to my letter of inquiry; but it contained no mention at all of the ordination at New York. And I also received from him, by post, *another* letter, in answer to mine, and relating entirely to that transaction. My letter to him was written in my *official* capacity, to inquire into the particulars of a *public* transaction, in which he had, officially, taken part, and which might affect my official conduct in reference to the Ministers of

his Church. And his answer—which was not marked as private—had reference entirely to that most emphatically public transaction.

Now, I cannot but think that a person of a very nice sense of honour, or having a large share of christian charity, would never bring a heavy charge against another on a confessedly doubtful recollection, but would carefully ascertain the true state of the fact. But if any one did find that he had, through a slip of memory, brought forward a groundless charge, he would, if he had a spark of honesty, take the earliest opportunity of publicly retracting it.

Whether Dr. McVickar has ever done so through the American press, I know not. Nothing of the kind has come to my knowledge.*

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* Happening to have at hand the private letter which Dr. McVickar alludes to, I have thought it best to print it entire, as a proof how utterly at variance with fact is his account of its contents:—

'Col. Coll., New York, 27th Oct., 1843.

'My dear Sir,

'In forwarding to you by the present conveyance copies of the American republication of your late work, permit me to introduce to you also, my brother-in-law, Judge Jay, who with his family are on a journey of health to Europe and the East. The only other works of yours republished with us are the *Rhetoric* and *Logic*, copies of which I will forward hereafter. They are reprinted in Boston. I use them in my college classes, and find them admirable. A little more of method would perhaps facilitate the study to younger students. I regret having given you trouble for nothing in the case of the French family, but am not the less indebted to you for your kindness. You may remember a poor family of 'Wheeler' you introduced to my care some years since. Their history would furnish a good narrative of the opening afforded in our country to industry and good management. One son is recorder of the capital of one of our Western States. The copies of your *Essay* forwarded to

In reference to some other of the distinguishing tenets and practices of the Tract-Party, I may mention that on the occasion of my sending him the essay on 'SELF-DENIAL' (the concluding one in the later editions of the essays of the *second series*), he says, 'I have read it with much satisfaction, feeling that I was instructed in doctrine, and furnished with cogent reasons, on many points, for the opinion I had entertained, but could not have adequately defended.'

In another letter he says, 'I have read with deep interest Dr. West's sermon on '*Reserve*,' preached at your Ordination last September.'

Some apology may be necessary for publishing passages so laudatory of myself; and it may, perhaps, be considered an insufficient apology to say, that there is much more of the same kind which I have for that very reason suppressed. But I felt that I could not do justice to the Bishop without stating in his own words his opinions on several important questions. And as far as these words have reference to myself, the reader will, doubtless, make due allowance for the partiality naturally felt by a former Tutor to a pupil who had been so assiduously trained by him,

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me I distributed according to directions. To Mr. Jay I refer you with confidence for all information you may desire touching our social and political state. As the only surviving son of John Jay of our Revolution, his name and family are already familiar.

'Believe, me,

'Very respectfully and truly,

'Your friend and servant,

'JOHN MCVICKAR.'

'Richard Whately, D.D., &c., &c.'

and who has always gratefully attributed whatever distinction he has attained, in a great degree to that training. And should any reader be disposed to attribute undue partiality to either of us, he will at least have perceived, from the foregoing pages, that with flattery, properly so called, neither of us is chargeable, since we did not hesitate, in those few instances where we did not agree in opinion, to avow and to act upon each his own conviction.

In reference to one point connected with Church-authority and general councils, I will take leave to insert here a passage in which I have cited his words from an unpublished Lecture delivered in Oriel College Chapel. Two of the Lectures written by him for that course are printed in this volume. But the one from which the extract was made I have not thought it worth while to print, as the rest of it contains little or nothing but what is to be found in other works:—

'The authority on which we rest our conviction of the genuineness of the New Testament Scriptures, is of the same *kind*, though incomparably *stronger in degree*. For it is not to the Roman world in its widest acceptation, but to the *literary* portion of it, that we appeal, in respect of any volume of the Classics. On the contrary, the Christian Scriptures were addressed to all classes (the doctrine of what is called 'Reserve'—of putting the light of the Gospel under a bushel—being no part of the apostolic sys-

tem); so that probably for one reader of Cicero or Livy there were more than fifty persons,—even in a very early period of the Church,—anxious to possess copies of the New Testament Scriptures, and careful in proportion to the high importance of the subject, as to the genuineness and accuracy of what they read. On this point I will take the liberty of citing the words of an eminent writer (Bishop Copleston), from an unpublished discourse delivered a good many years ago at Oxford in a course of lectures. . . 'Nothing is more remarkable in Christianity than the care and anxiety with which the early Christians examined the pretensions of any writing to be received as the work of an Apostle. This will also account for the interval of time which elapsed before all the books of the Canon became generally received. It does not indeed appear that the genuineness of any of the four Gospels was ever doubted; but the Epistles, being addressed to particular Churches, and at various times, it must have required for one of these some interval before its communication could take place throughout every country in which the Gospel was preached, accompanied by such evidence as should be satisfactory to every other Church. . . . As soon as can be supposed possible, the Christians of all countries remarkably agreed in receiving them as canonical; while the hesitation of a few proves only that this agreement was not a hasty or careless assent, but a deliberate and unbiassed judgment. . . . It cannot be too strongly pressed upon your attention that the credit of a canon thus

composed is infinitely greater than if it had rested *on the authority of some general Council.* For the decision of a Council is the decision of a majority only: whereas this is ratified by the voice of every separate church. It is, moreover, the decision not of one meeting, or of one age, but the uncontradicted *belief* of *all* the first churches, spreading gradually and naturally as the Gospel spread:—a belief which was not imposed *by authority,* but was the result of their own cautious and independent examination.' *

I had also several communications from the Bishop on some matters in themselves very insignificant, but which had been made, by the Party above alluded to, an occasion for vehement contests and disastrous schism—those relating to clerical Vestments and Church-ceremonies. He writes to me in December, 1844—'Very soon, I imagine, our several opinions on these little matters will become well known, through uncontradicted statements of the press. . . . . Wherever I go, and whoever I talk to, —— is universally blamed. . . . . It is a portion only of the clergy who will side with him, and this, in a great measure, from a mistaken idea of his power to decide such questions: e. g. *preaching* in a gown; a thing wholly unprovided for by the Rubric.'

'By the bye I have this moment read a very useful and sensible Ordination-Charge of the Bishop of Worcester, whose general view of the points was de-

* *Kingdom of Christ,* Appendix K, pp. 253–4.

clared in his last Visitation-Charge; but they are here sensibly, and I think convincingly, handled.'

'Frivolous, to be sure, these controversies about clerical dress are; yet I wonder that no one of ——'s opponents has hit upon an *argumentum ad hominem*, decisive, as it seems to me, against him. Do look, if you can find time, into Cardwell's *Liturgies of Edward VI.* At page 347 you will find some rubrical notes on the first Liturgy (which Liturgy, as you know, is the law as to Clerical Vestments prescribed by our Common Prayer Book of 1661), notes left out in the edition of 1552. And by these, the Alb or Cope is directed for the priest in the Communion Service, and the Cope or Vestment, in *addition to the Rochet and the Alb*, for the BISHOP, whenever he executes any public ministration in the church; and also a *pastoral staff* in his hand, or borne by the chaplain.'

'He requires his clergy to wear an *alb* and *cope*, *if* the parish provide them. The *clergyman* is excused, if they are *not* provided, and may wear a surplice. 'Quam temere in nosmet,' &c.! By the same rule, the *Bishop* is bound to appear with a Cope, Alb, and Staff; and this, *without excuse;* for they are not to be provided by churchwardens, but by himself.'

'I don't wonder that you turn with disgust from such silly disputes. They remind me of an answer the solemn old Blenkinsop once gave me, when I had a Cambridge friend to be admitted to an 'ad eundem' degree, and I asked him to furnish a hood, 'Sir, I do nothing in Divinity.'"

The much-agitated questions respecting Baptism, I need only allude to here; as I have fully set forth the Bishop's views on that subject in the charge ('*Infant Baptism Considered,*') of the year 1850, which I accordingly inscribed to his memory.

On several other points relating to what is commonly called 'the Calvinistic controversy,' his opinions are expressed in the volume of Discourses he published. And even those who do not concur with him, cannot fail, I think, to acknowledge the candour and courtesy with which different parties are treated. Though not adopting, himself, the theory either of the Calvinists or the Arminians, he was not for excluding either from the Church, or from its Ministry; nor did he speak (as some on each side are too apt to do) as if there were not at least something plausible to be urged by each. He himself entertained much the same views as I have set forth in the third and fourth Essays of the second series: which received, while in manuscript, his cordial approbation.

Those Essays, and all the other Works published before my coming to Dublin (besides a considerable portion of the later ones), may be regarded as so far Bishop Copleston's, that though he is not responsible for any part of them—since I always ultimately decided according to my own conviction—they were submitted, wholly, or in great part, to him, before publication, and are indebted to him for many important suggestions and corrections.

In particular, I remember conversing with him on

the subject of an Article in the *Edinburgh Review*, eulogising Hume's *Essay on Miracles;* and we were observing to one another how easy it would be, on Hume's principles, to throw doubt on the history of the wonderful events that had recently occurred in Europe. I put down on paper the substance of our conversation, and showed it to him; when he told me he had just been thinking of doing this very thing himself. The sketch thus drawn out, I subsequently completed, with the aid of some suggestions from him; and it was afterwards published, partly in the pamphlet entitled *Historic Doubts*, and, (a portion of it) subsequently, in the *Historic Certainties*.

I have also mentioned in the *Lectures on the Apostles* (Note H, p. 204), that I am indebted to him for the solution of a difficulty which has greatly perplexed commentators, and which relates to a point of some importance in the Apostolic Decree, recorded in *Acts* xv.

It may be worth while here to advert to another question which has been very warmly taken up by some of those who maintain what are called 'High Church principles.' It is well known that in very many churches which are frequented by large congregations (such as many of those in London and other great towns), it has long been the practice, in administering the Lord's Supper, to address at once all who are at one time kneeling at the rails, using the

prescribed words in the plural number, whenever it so happens—as is usually the case in those churches—that the communicants are very numerous.

This practice is vehemently decried by some, as a departure from the Rubric; inasmuch as it is not there expressly authorised. And I have even seen it stigmatized as an innovation introduced by the Calvinistic party, in order to favour their own doctrinal views; though it is very far from being at all confined to that party; and what connection it can have with Calvin's theories, it requires some ingenuity to make out.

Bishop Copleston always considered the objection to this practice as an overstrained interpretation of the letter of a law, so as to defeat the spirit of it; what Cicero calls 'malitiosa juris interpretatio.' For he could not believe that the framers of our Formularies—anxious as they evidently were, that *all* should be communicants—could have designed virtually to *excommunicate,* in very many places, more than half the worshippers. Now it is evident that in churches where the communicants amount (as often happens) to 300 or 400, or more,—and *would* amount to above double that number, if the *exhortations in our Prayer Book* were duly attended to, it would be morally impossible to get through the Service in any other mode than that complained of.

The Bishop accordingly felt no doubt that our Reformers meant, and supposed that every one would understand them to mean, that several persons might

occasionally be addressed at once, and that, then, the plural number might be used.

And, accordingly, this simple and natural mode of interpretation is adopted and acted on in many other cases, even by those who object to it in this. In *publishing the banns of marriage*, for instance, when there are several couples, no one ever repeats for each separately the whole formula (which would occupy in some populous parishes more than half an hour), but applies the same words to all, inserting, without any express written authority for it, the word 'respectively.'

The like is commonly done, and never objected to, when there are several children to be baptized, or several couples to be married, at the same time. And all Bishops are accustomed, occasionally at least, to administer the rite of *confirmation* in an analogous manner; using the formula of prayer in the plural number. All of them, therefore, may fairly be regarded as bearing testimony to Bishop Copleston's principle of interpretation.

But any one who should resolve to adhere to the principle of a rigid conformity in all cases to the letter of a law, without any regard to its spirit, would find himself involved in difficulties, not only in such cases as those just referred to, but also even in the Communion Service itself. For, the 'Exhortation' is to be read, according to the words of the Rubric, 'when the people are conveniently *placed* for receiving the Lord's Supper.' So that, according to the strict letter,

on the above principles, the minister should read that exhortation, and proceed with the rest of the Service to the very end, addressing *those only who are at one time kneeling* at the Communion-table rails; and when these have communicated, and have retired to make room for others, he should begin anew at the Exhortation, and proceed to the end; and so on, over and over again, for each set of communicants that are successively 'conveniently placed for receiving the Lord's Supper.'

Any one who is always ready to urge, like Shylock, 'Is it so nominated in the bond?' is liable, like him, to find the law bearing hard on himself:—

> 'For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd
> Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.'

To anything, however, that could be fairly considered as a real irregularity,—to every fanciful and unauthorised innovation,—no one could be more decidedly opposed than Bishop Copleston. And it is remarkable that several of those who, in the case now before us, are the most vehement in insisting on a rigid and overstrained adherence to the letter, are the very persons who have gone the greatest lengths in introducing innovations both in doctrine and in practice, the most completely at variance both with the letter and the spirit of our Church's Formularies. Many of them, for instance, studiously make the reading of the Service, which was designed to be well heard and understood by the people, inaudible to many, and unintelligible to many more.

What the Bishop's opinion was of the practice introduced by many of the Tract-party, of what is called 'intoning' the Church Service, may be collected not only from his own practice, but also from a letter of his printed in the *Memoir* (p. 137), in which he expresses his wish 'that clergymen would read and preach as they talk when earnestly engaged in conversation upon a serious subject.' But they put on, he complains, 'together with their surplice, a certain artificial tone.' I am convinced, indeed, that he was far from meaning to confine his censure to what is technically called 'intoning;' though to that it most emphatically applies. But he meant, no doubt, to include in that censure the far greater number who, without going that length, 'assume a tone, grave indeed, and solemn and decorous, but altogether removed from that of ordinary life, and therefore seldom *engaging* the attention, although a sense of duty, and the importance of the matter may preserve it.'

To the truth of the editor's remark that 'many persons would be disposed to demur to the Bishop's recommendation,' no one is more competent to testify than myself. For when above a quarter of a century ago, I put forth, and explained, and defended the very same doctrine, (in Part IV. of the *Elements of Rhetoric*,) it met with very general disapprobation. And though the principles of elocution there maintained have been ever since gradually, and not very slowly, gaining ground, there is still, I apprehend,

a considerable majority opposed to them, in practice at least, if not in theory.

The most important portions of the Treatise on *Rhetoric* just alluded to, were submitted to Bishop Copleston, and received the benefit of his suggestions and criticisms, long before the work was published, or even designed to be published. Part I., the subjects of which would have been by many writers brought under the head of *logic*, was that in which he had the most share. I well remember submitting to him, above forty years ago, in the rough state, my observations on the distinction between *cause* and *proof*, and on the importance, so generally overlooked, of attending to it. He remarked playfully, that he was mortified at what I showed him, for that he had the same thing in his Common-Place-Book, and had supposed it to be exclusively his own; and that he had the design of one day publishing something on the subject. I afterwards consulted him on several other points which are treated of in the work just referred to. (See Part I., chap. 2, §§ 3 and 7.) But, on the whole, the assistance I derived from him in that work was considerably less than in the Treatise on *Logic*.

His share in this latter was so great, that, as is set forth in the Dedication and in the Preface, it may be considered as his Work and mine in about equal proportions. And yet, being prepared for the Press, and actually published by myself, most persons seem

to have totally overlooked the circumstance that he had any share at all in it.

I have frequently made the remark, and sometimes to himself, that this may, perhaps, be in part attributed to the very openness with which I acknowledged, and prominently put forward, my obligations to him in that Work (which may sufficiently explain, and justify, the omission of all mention of it in the *Memoir*);* and that if I had suppressed, or endeavoured to extenuate those obligations, some persons would, perhaps, have taken a pleasure in investigating the question, whether the Work was as much my own as it professed to be, and in collecting (which would not have been difficult) indications from the Bishop's conversation and writings, of my having in reality borrowed much from him.*

Certain it is, that, as the case stands, his share in the Work is so much overlooked, that, in one of the Reviews of the *Memoir*, he is characterised as a sensible, indeed, and respectable writer, but not such a one as to have exercised any influence on the age. Now this could never have been said by any one who was thinking of him as 'part-owner' of the Treatise in question. That a very great change *has* come over the public mind, with respect to logical studies, within the memory of even middle-aged men, is an undeniable fact. And that that Work had

* Concealment is the great spur to curiosity, which gives an interest to investigation. The celebrated *Letters of Junius* would probably have long since been forgotten, if the author could have been clearly pointed out at the time.

at least something to do with this change, is what few would deny to have at least some show of probability.

Lord Dudley, in one of the published letters to Bishop Copleston of forty years ago, remarks that it is some *presumption* against Logic (he does not urge it as a decisive proof), that the study of it flourished in the Dark Ages, and was laid aside and contemned when science and intellectual activity revived. It is a remarkable circumstance that the very person he was writing to should have lived to see this presumption, in a great degree through his own instrumentality, completely done away. For hardly any one would make such a remark now, or at any time within the last twenty years.* Even those most opposed to the study, complain that its cultivation has operated as an impediment to the production of what they call a truly philosophical system of logic; a system about which they declaim in grandiloquous but vague terms, as something that is to effect vast wonders, when it shall have been dis-

* I do not mean, however, that much misconception on this subject has not prevailed within that period, and even down to the present day. I remember, for instance, about the time when the proceedings of the Tract-party first excited general attention, and caused much alarm, that an article in one of the London daily papers (the organ of an opposite party), vehemently denounced *the study of logic* at Oxford, on the ground that some of the Tractite-Leaders were considered very able Logicians; and it was gravely proposed that this study should be proscribed by law!

The same writer would, one may suppose, have suggested to the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo, to spike his cannon, and make his men throw away their muskets, on account of the slaughter caused by those of the French.

covered; as great, perhaps, as the 'Philosopher's stone' and the 'Universal Medicine;' in common with which, it labours under that great drawback, that it *does not yet exist*, and most likely never will.

But if the seekers after this 'Universal medicine' for intellectual diseases, complain of the Aristotelian logic as an impediment in their way, they may be reminded that a fair field was left open for them for a very long time, when logic was almost universally neglected; so that they had full leisure for hatching the egg of their own philosophical system, if there had been any vitality in it.

The very complaint itself, however, would be a proof, if any could be needed, of the existing popularity of the study. But, at the time when Lord Dudley was writing, a Treatise on Logic would have been regarded in much the same light as one on Chiromancy or Astrology. And now, independently of the extensive circulation of the Work itself above referred to, and of the abridgment of it, entitled *Lessons on Reasoning* (besides several reprints of it in the United States of America, where it is a text-book in, I believe, every one of their Colleges), a number of other publications, really or professedly on the same subject, have subsequently appeared: some of them borrowed in great part from that Work; some professing to look down upon it as confined to elements which almost all are familiar with, and to have advanced to some great discoveries beyond; and some of them wandering away from the legitimate

province of Science, into antiquarian researches, or disquisitions on matters that have no necessary connection with logic; but all indicating, that, from whatever cause, some influence *has* been exercised on the mind of the present generation.

I cannot doubt, therefore, that the writer of the Review just alluded to, must have been either ignorant, or else wholly forgetful, of Bishop Copleston's share in a Work which, at least, seems to have contributed to so great a change.

If I were to extract from his Common-Place-Book all that relates to the subject, I should be burdening this volume with a repetition of much that has been already published. And yet I should, even so, fail of setting forth anything like the whole of his claims; because, not to mention his having been originally my teacher in the science, the many suggestions thrown out in conversation, and the revision and corrections which the Work received before publication, would not appear.

A few extracts, however, on the subject, will be given as a specimen, and only a specimen, of what he had thought and said upon it.

These studies, among others, were pursued by him during the period when his powers were in their fullest vigour. If the whole of his life were divided into three equal portions, the middle one is that in which (as all would allow who have known him long and intimately) his intellectual energies were in their chief strength. It was, as it were, his *meridian*. In the later portion of his life there was still the

same sun, but it was an evening sun. Though remaining still a man of eminent ability, frequent and severe attacks of a most depressing malady had gradually impaired the force and activity of his mind, and indisposed, if not disqualified, him for the energetic pursuit of the studies, in which, in the time of his pristine vigour, he had so much excelled. In one of his letters to me, he himself alludes (in reference to a logical work which I had been mentioning) to this change; referring to a well-known passage of Horace (*1st Ep.*): 'Quæris antiquo me includere ludo? Non eadem est ætas, non mens.'

He was appointed Tutor at Oriel College soon after his election, and before he had taken his M.A. Degree. He has described to me the perplexity he felt on finding that he was expected to lecture, among other things, in Logic. He had never attended any lecture on the subject; nor was it taught at all, in his time, at his former College. It is to be observed that this was previous to the passing of what was emphatically called '*The* Examination Statute' (in 1800),—that which first made the University examinations something beyond an empty form; and the Tutors accordingly of each College lectured their pupils in whatever they thought fit, without reference to any examination but their own. Logic was by the greater part regarded as a system of useless and obsolete subtleties, to be laid on the same shelf with Astrology and Alchemy.

Mr. Copleston accordingly, having received no instruction in it, and having no living help to apply to,

collected and read all the books he could meet with that professed to treat of it. The far greater part of what he had thus to wade through, he found to be either ingenious trifling, or matter irrelevant to the science. But from this chaos of loose materials, mingled with rubbish, he formed in his own mind a coherent, and intelligible, and valuable system, carefully separating and preserving every particle of gold found mingled with the worthless clay and sand that was to be washed away.

Ill can those appreciate the difficulty and the tediousness of such a task, and still less the skill required for it, who have, from the first, had placed before them, cleared from all extraneous matter, and expressed in perspicuous language, what will have then appeared to them very simple and obvious truths, but which had before been obscured or disguised by indistinct or ambiguous expressions. And the more successfully this task is accomplished, the more is the student likely to under-rate its magnitude. When the hills are completely cut away, and the chasms bridged over, and the swamps rendered firm, so that the steam-carriage glides smoothly along, the traveller is apt to think lightly of the obstacles that were to be overcome.

In every undertaking of this kind, as far as regards Logic, that I have myself ever been concerned in, I had part of the work ready done for me by Bishop Copleston, and the advantage of his assistance in the remainder. He, on the other hand, had to take the

beginning himself, and to do everything without any assistance from others.

In extracts from the Common-Place-Book, the reader will of course not expect the same high *finish*, in style or in matter, that might fairly be looked for in anything designed for the press. But there is an advantage in being admitted into the STUDIO of an eminent artist, distinct from, and in some respects beyond, that derived from the contemplation of the works of art, complete. We thus see not only *what* is done, but, in some degree, *how* it is done.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

COMMON-PLACE-BOOK.

'Invenies etiam disjecti membra Poetæ.'

CERTAINTY.

LOCKE'S definition of this word is very confused. He talks of certainty being twofold—*certainty of truth and certainty of knowledge.* 'Certainty of truth,' he says, 'is when words are so put together in propositions as exactly to express the agreement or disagreement of the ideas they stand for as really it is.' How does this differ from truth simply, or what he had called in the preceding chapter *real truth?*

Again, 'certainty of knowledge,' he says, 'is to perceive the agreement or disagreement of ideas, as expressed in any proposition.' But this is all he means by the word *knowledge.*

In fact, *certain* is a word *relative* to the mind, and *extended* in its use to the object of our thoughts. A thing is only so far *certain* as *we* are certain of it. Our knowledge or conviction can have no influence on the nature of the thing. The same may be said of *probable.* In its proper signification it relates to the mind, and is improperly extended to things themselves. From this ambiguous use of the word *certain* (as generally happens), people have imagined that there is some common quality of an abstruse and subtle nature belonging both to the mind and to the object.

This common confusion in the use of the word *certain*, appears in the following line of Milton:—

> 'Foreknowledge hath no influence on their fault,
> Which had no less proved *certain*, unforeknown.'
> *Par. Lost*, iii. 118.

A similar confusion of speech occurs in the following line:—

> 'Or aught by me *immutably foreseen*.'—*Ibid.* iii. 121.

Bentley, struck with the absurdity, alters it into *foredoomed;* but Newton is right in thinking that Milton wrote it as it is, however absurd.

An event is certain when it is known that so it will be. *Certum est,* it is *decreed,* is the original of the phrase; and it is only subsequently extended from events within our power to events over which we have no control, because they agree, or seem to agree, in one leading property, that of being *fixed and necessary.* In accurate reasoning, therefore, the word *certain* ought never to be used as merely synonymous with *necessary.* Physical events we call *necessary,* because of their depending on *fixed causes,* not on *known* causes; when they depend also on *known* causes, they may be called *certain.* The variations of the weather arise from *necessary and fixed* causes, but they are proverbially uncertain.

It follows that in morals nothing is strictly *certain.* In proportion as the motives and dispositions of men are *known,* actions, the consequences of those motives and dispositions, may be called *certain;* but it should carefully be remembered that this is a secondary and *improper* use of the term. To the Divine mind everything must be equally *certain;* that is, equally *known;* but it by no means follows that, on that account, everything is necessary. (*Vide* 'CICERO *de Fato,*' c. 12.)

Locke says (b. iv. c. 6, § 16), 'General certainty is never to be found but in our ideas;' by which he seems to mean the same thing as when it is said that all demonstrative reasoning is but the expansion of terms.

Mathematical reasoning, it is now generally admitted, depends entirely on the definitions, that is, on the nature of the elementary ideas, about which we reason. All the properties demonstrated of the circle exist in the notion or definition of a circle, though not particularly expressed; and so all deduction from principles depends on the import of the terms used, and is, in fact, but a development of that import. Any other propositions relating to these terms are true or not, according to the authority or evidence on which the assertion rests. They are not, therefore, *certainties*, but *probabilities*. We *demonstrate* what *is*, we cannot *demonstrate* what will be, and it is an extension of the term so to apply it. When we talk, therefore, of *demonstrable* truths, we mean either mathematical theorems (which, according to the definitions or hypotheses, are strictly so) or those logical inferences which must be true if the terms are admitted, or things of which we have the evidence of our senses. But the anticipations of science, however *certain* we may be that they will be fulfilled, are not *demonstrable*. As yet they *are* not; if the course of Nature continues unchanged, they *will* be.

Stewart would limit demonstration or demonstrative evidence to that species of proof which holds in mathematics, where everything depends on the *definitions* of the terms employed. Hobbes (*Computatio sive Logica*) extends this to all syllogistic reasoning, which is in fact hypothetical, and dependent on the import of its words. Stewart seems prejudiced against the form of Syllogism; and admitting, as he does, that its form presupposes this very principle, denies that it is applicable to any subject but mathematics. Surely hypothetical reasoning is applicable to all subjects? In

proportion as our terms are well defined, it is conclusive and instructive in all.

The principles of reasoning are certain intuitive axioms, which, perhaps, are never expressed in words or even reflected upon, but which we tacitly assume in every process of reasoning. 'That the same thing cannot be, and not be,' is a principle universally implied in reasoning; it may, therefore, be called an 'innate idea.' Again, 'That the laws of nature are fixed,' is a principle universally assumed in all physical investigation. If either of these principles be denied or doubted, there can be no deduction. In other words, all reasoning is hypothetical; that is, it proceeds upon the assumption of certain principles. That reasoning is demonstrative which assumes only *undeniable* principles. All other reasoning is probable only, *i. e.* conclusive only, in so far as the principles it assumes are just.

DIVISION.

Different principles of division must be adopted according to the object of the division. Stewart's discussion of the general distribution of sciences, in the Dissertation prefixed to the *Encyclopædia,* proceeds on the absurd supposition that *one* mode is the best for all purposes. There is an excellent passage in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning,* on the subject. His illustration is taken from the sorting which a Secretary of State would make of his papers.

Some good remarks are made in the *British Critic* for January, 1820, in a review of Jameson's *Mineralogy,* on the inconsistency of the classification commonly adopted by mineralogists. But the reviewer does not seem distinctly to see the simple principle above-mentioned, viz. that no *one* principle of classification is the *best* for *all* purposes; a care only should be taken that our classification is not founded on *several* principles, which always produces confusion, and

violates that fundamental rule of logic, *Membra dividentia sint opposita.*

ANALYSIS.

It is a question how far analysis may be *usefully* pursued. In every subject we may trace up all its varieties to *one* common source; but such a classification is of no real use. Thus, to resolve all the senses into that of feeling; all the mechanical powers into that of the lever; all taste into association; all the Greek language into two or three simple elements, or even into one, as some have done; all human motives into selfishness,—are mere speculations, amusing, perhaps, for the moment, but no way conducive to right judgment or excellence in practice. As soon as we have performed our analysis we must instantly abandon it, and take our station lower down in the scheme, where the subdivisions between classes begin to be numerous, and the distinctions between classes universally acknowledged.

Etymology is liable to abuse of this kind. In a moderate degree it is not only useful, as assisting the memory, but highly instructive and pleasing. But if pushed so far as to refer all words to a few primary elements, it loses all its value. It is like pursuing heraldry up to the first pair of mankind. To trace family connections is not only interesting, but serviceable; and to classify the innumerable particulars of the species under some heads, guards against confusion, and delights the mind with the idea of order and method; but to ascend to the genus summum is to surrender all its advantages, and to return to that very indistinctness which we endeavoured to avoid by classification.

Even where the analysis is just, for practical purposes it is necessary to take up our ground on several advanced points, which, for the occasion, may be considered as original

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positions. Thus, in mathematics, certain advanced theorems should be considered as the very elements of science, the standards to which subsequent reasonings are referred, or the foundations on which they rest. It would be a waste of time and labour to dig deeper. In logic, although all reasoning is resolvable into the categorical syllogism, yet it is convenient, and even practically necessary, to adopt other forms, such as the hypothetical, causal, the dilemma, &c., which have their appropriate rules to try their validity, without having recourse to the ultimate analysis. Thus, too, in mechanics, though all the Powers are resolvable into the lever, yet each of them has its appropriate rules, which are referred to in practice as the ultimate authority; they are, in fact, all, disguised levers.

D. Stewart himself, although, in his objections against logic, he seems to think that the form of syllogism is to be continually employed, yet, when speaking of mathematics, says: 'Nothing can be more disgusting than a demonstration where even the simplest and most obvious steps are brought forward to view, and where no appeal is made to that stock of previous knowledge which memory has identified with the operations of reason.' (*Elem.* vol. ii. c. 2, § 1, p. 93.)

AVERAGE.

Is there not a close analogy between the use of *general terms* in moral reasoning, and *averages* in actual calculation? A certain latitude must in each case be allowed, and for individual transactions neither method is a sufficient guide. The *average* may, in fact, not coincide with a single case of that class which it represents; *e. g.* the average value of each ship in a fleet may be 5000*l.*, and yet the actual value of each may be above or below it. To him who should treat

for *one*, the knowledge of this average would be useless. In proportion as he treats *for a greater and a greater number* it will serve him as a guide, and for the whole fleet as an exact criterion.

Thus a general term, such as theft, includes an infinity of particular cases, and is expressive of the average or general character of them all, some possessing more, others less criminality. The general punishment denounced by law gives me no standard by which I can estimate the heinousness of a particular case: it may be one of the lowest rank, or it may be one of the highest. If, after having informed myself accurately of the merits of the case, I am inclined to treat it as slight and venial, how unfair it is (as is sometimes done) for a person to interpose and say, 'Well, but after all it is a theft;' which is merely to refer me back again to the average, in order that I may form an estimate!

Hence the wider the interval between the average and each extreme, the greater may be the amount of the loss or gain, and the greater the risk, in regarding that average as the standard. And so, in general terms, the more lax and comprehensive the *genera*, the greater room is there for error, and the more cautious ought we to be in judging of individual cases thus generally described.

It is from this cause that Jurisprudence becomes so voluminous. The law is general in its enactments; in its administration it is applied to particular cases. The average fails us here, and we are obliged to divide and subdivide, as we acquire a greater insight into the character of the several cases.

In moral reasoning the same analogy holds. The larger the field to which we apply it, the safer are the conclusions when expressed in general terms—as, in commerce, the larger the concern, the better will the average serve us. But the nearer we come to single cases, the less conclusive is our

reasoning. The average serves for *wholesale*, not for *retail* trading.

Thus, in order to get a just idea of the outline of an object, I purposely retire to such a distance as shall render the subordinate parts less conspicuous and obtrusive on the view. The angle of vision is lessened, but the object is contemplated more steadily. If I want to compare this object with others, it is still more necessary to retire far, in order to admit these objects into the same field of vision. The mutual relations are thus more clearly discerned; and as these relations are in no degree affected by the subordinate circumstances now unseen, it is better that they should be out of sight, as they might otherwise distract the attention.

It should, however, always be borne in mind, that, in proportion to the distance of the object (or the generalisation of the term), it must be understood as bearing relation to other objects *also* distant, or other terms *likewise* general. We must observe a kind of mental *perspective* in our reasoning—a quality which is most wanting in those who have had a *smattering* in metaphysics, and who are perpetually mingling up the most abstract truths with the maxims and practices of common life, comparing the one with the other, and trying their respective merits by the same standard. *E. g.* When Mr. Owen, of Lanark, founds, upon the success of experiments formed under his own eye, a system for the organisation of the whole kingdom: or when the success of giving potato plots to cottagers in one parish, and observed in one generation, is produced as a proof that a nation might be so circumstanced, and poverty extinguished. Hence the ridiculous effect of some comic characters, who are represented as blundering in practice from theoretic notions they have imbibed. The representation is often faulty and inartificial, and most fallacious in its result, if it leads to the rejection of theory as vain and unfounded. The folly consists in combining machinery of parts formed on different scales.

TRUTH.

This word is, in common use, confounded with *Reality*. It differs from it, inasmuch as *Truth* implies a *report* of something that *is; reality* denotes the existence of a thing, whether *affirmed* and *reported* of, or not.

Truth cannot be correctly said of anything, but of a *report or representation* of something, either by words, or by some other signs. The thing reported either *is*, or is *not;* the report is either *true* or *false*. We are apt, however, to transfer the epithet of the sign to the thing signified. The things themselves are called *truths*, instead of *facts* or *realities*. The same laxity is observable in the converse of this. Assertions concerning matters of *fact* are sometimes called *facts*. Thus we hear of *false facts*, a thing, literally impossible and absurd.

Indeed, the whole vocabulary relating to *things* and the *signs of things* is liable to this abuse. *E. g.* 'He would *infallibly* have been drowned.'

Not only in speaking do men confound the words *truth* and *reality*, but the confusion enters more or less into their thoughts, and sometimes governs their actions. 'Prophesy unto us smooth things, prophesy deceit.' Bernier, the French traveller, in his account of Delhi, speaking of the astrologers who are consulted by the common people on all occasions, says, that the women often beg them to *make the stars favourable to them*. A similar confusion seems to have prevailed in Balak's mind, when he sent for Balaam.*

This may be also resolved into the fallacy of *non causa pro causâ*, mistaking a concomitant circumstance for a cause.

As *reason* is confounded with *cause*, *truth* with *reality*, so all the subordinate vocabulary connected with those ideas is

* I have noticed this confusion of thought in the Sermon on Ahab and Micaiah.—Ed.

apt to be confounded, *infallible* with *inevitable*, *certain* with *necessary*. One of the most remarkable instances is the confusion of *impossible* and *inconceivable*, which seems to have misled Clarke in his *Demonstration*, as well as many other metaphysical writers.

'That God should not know a thing,' is rather *inconceivable* than *impossible*. It is a proposition which contradicts itself. According to the notion annexed to the word God, a Being that was ignorant of anything would not be God. It is resolved therefore into that fundamental maxim, 'It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be.'

If we retain the use of *impossible* in this sense, there are two kinds of *impossibilities;* one, which involves a contradiction in terms; the other, which contradicts all experience. The first, *metaphysical* or logical; the second may be called *physical*. By the latter we only mean, *contrary to the uniform course* of nature. That God can prevail over the latter, all who believe in miracles must admit. The former is addressed only to our conceptions, and reminds us of their real nature, that we may not involve ourselves in contradiction.

LANGUAGE.

It is a fundamental question in the Philosophy of Language, how far its structure ought to conform to the *reality* of things, and how far to their *appearance*. When the *appearance* differs essentially from the *reality*, by adapting language to the former rather than to the latter, we confirm the ignorant in their errors. On the other hand, if we scrupulously accommodated language to the *real* nature of things, disregarding the *relative* character of things, with which we, as men, are most concerned, it would often be an unfit instrument for the business of life, and certainly would be a less convenient medium for conveying our own perceptions and inclinations to one another. *E. g.* We say,

'The sun rises,' 'the sun sets,' 'such a body is green or blue.' *Efficient* cause. Necessary connection. A river is spoken of as possessing identity. *Time* destroys. Cold freezes water. Why should the substance be called *water* rather than *ice* or *steam*—except that to human experience it commonly appears under that form? Hence we regard this to be its proper nature, and other forms only departures or occasional variations from it.

Thus, too, we attribute (in language) mental properties to material subjects—and talk of power, force, agent, patient, action, attraction, repulsion—terms improper, strictly speaking, but expedient and even necessary for use.

If man were not allowed to be an Egotist, and talk of the phenomena of nature as they affect his own senses, even the most scientific terms would be proofs of ignorance. The sun's *disk*, the *axis* of the earth; the right ascension and declination of heavenly bodies, their opposition and conjunction, the *libration* of the moon, *node*, *rising* and *setting*, &c., are all terms of this kind. *Longitude* and *latitude* are names which arose either from a mistaken opinion of the earth's shape, or from an imperfect acquaintance with the state of the world. The ancients, in the time of Polemy, A.D. 140, knew more of the earth from east to west, than from north to south. Hence they called the first its length, the other its breadth. *Eclipse* comes from a false notion that the sun *left* its place in the heavens, ἐκλειπεῖν τὴν ἕδραν (Herod.). In fact, the line of a falling body is only relatively *perpendicular*. In reality, it is a curve of a most complicated nature.

Who would wish to talk of fire and its effects as a chemist does?

As it would be inconvenient and even injurious to have two kinds of languages, one purely philosophical, and the other merely practical, language ought to be framed on the basis of a liberal compromise between contemplation and

action. There will always be a debatable ground of some extent between their respective districts, the limits of which will vary in proportion as philosophy is diffused over mankind. But it would be idle to surrender a short name which answers all the purposes of life, such as *salt*, for a prolix denomination, although more truly expressive of its composition, as 'muriate of soda.'

Wallis's remarks in his Chap. II. on the Category of Action and Passion is very just. 'Nonnunquam etiam formulæ grammaticæ sunt notionibus philosophicis contrariæ, e. g. oculus *videt* lucem, &c.' Still though this mode of speaking does not correspond with the truth of things, it is not to be condemned if it correspond with our natural untutored conceptions of them. Otherwise, the phrase 'the sun rises' is improper. Even the inspired language is adapted to our ordinary conceptions, not to the reality of things.

ETYMOLOGY.

The affinity of words is by no means to be rejected because it is remote. If each step in the pedigree be clearly established, the connection is as certain as if it consisted of but one or two stages of descent. Thus *Journal* is undoubtedly derived from *Dies*. Dies, Diurnus, Giorno, Diurnal, Journal. Lord Clarendon, in his Life, uses *Diurnals* in the sense of *Journals*.

The *Arches* is a vulgar name with seamen for the *Archipelago*, which is itself a corruption of *αἰγεῖος πέλαγος* (Mitford's *History of Greece*, vol. i.); *Charter-house* from *Chartreux; Postmaster*, at Merton College, from *Portionista*. These corruptions are similar to those in daily use among our seamen, when *they assimilate the name of a ship to some word already familiar*. Bellerophon, Bully Ruffian; Bienfaisant, Bonny pheasant. So Bologne Mouth, Bull and Mouth; Belle

Sauvage, Bell and Savage. This is an important principle for the Etymologist to notice. It solves many phenomena in language. *E. g. Bridgewater,* a town in Somerset, is corrupted from Walter de Burgh; *Sparrow-grass,* from Asparagus; *Cowcumber,* from Cucumis; *Biscakes,* from Biscuits; 'please the pigs,' from 'please the pix,' or sacred box in which the host was kept; country dance, from *contredanse.*

Quelques choses	Kickshaws.
Hoc est corpus	Hocus pocus.
Another guise	Another guess.
Sucre Brulé	Barley sugar; and yet the French say sucre d'orge.*
Buffetier	Beafeater.
Euripus	Egripos, Negropont.
Oyez	O yes!
Chaussée	Causeway.
Il Janitore	John Dory.
Girasole Artichoke . . .	Jerusalem Artichoke.
Chacal	Jackall.

Toad-eater, from the Spanish *todito,* a familiar diminutive of todo (toto), one who does everything for you—*a fac-totum* †—a frequent member of the Spanish household. The word *ta panta* (τὰ πάντα) was the name for a similar personage at Rome. (See PETRONIUS.)

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* Originally it was barley-water, sweetened with sugar (a common remedy in coughs) boiled down to an extract. And some such is still made.—ED.

† I have heard an ingenious person object (and I think justly) to this etymology, and derive the word from the animal 'toad,' which I think equally improbable. Both seem to me to have overlooked a simple and obvious derivation.

One element in etymology, which is not to be lost sight of, is the tendency to contract or otherwise *alter in pronunciation* any word of which the utterance would be either profane or disgusting. *E. g.* 'Od's my life;' 'Gad;' 'Lud;' and many others.—ED.

Hence, too, the universal corruption which once prevailed in our language of the old genitive case. '*The King his*' for 'Kingis,' &c. This was at length so established as to give rise to a further corruption, *her* being substituted, in the case of a woman, for *his*. An example of this principle that, if we set out wrong, superior talents and learning only lead to greater error. *Optimum quodque corruptum fit pessimum.*

Hence in MSS. an ignorant copyist, though he wrote a word without meaning, or perhaps no word, was often nearer the original than a more learned scribe, who, dissatisfied with a corrupt and unmeaning reading, changed it to one that had at least some meaning, though not the true one.

The proneness to assimilate an unknown word to a known one is visible in MSS., and is the source of many errors.

The ancients seem to have been more careless in etymology than in any other subject of human research. Wherever any similitude strikes Aristotle or Cicero, for instance, between the sound of two words, which have also some affinity in meaning, however remote, they do not scruple to pronounce that the one was derived from the other, especially if such an etymology tends to illustrate or confirm their argument. Thus Aristotle (*Nic. Ethic.*, b. v.) derives σωφροσύνη from σώζειν τὴν φρόνησιν: in another place ἦθος from ἔθος.* But the most remarkable collection of these forced and arbitrary derivations, founded on no principle, but merely resemblance of sound, is at the end of his work *De Mundo*, the whole chapter περὶ τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ὀνομάτων. The Stoics were specially remarkable for such etymologies.

Thus also the Greek Fathers derived *pascha*, which comes from the Hebrew signifying *passover*, from πάσχειν, because then Christ suffered. (Chrysostom, *Hom.* 4, in. 1, *ad Tim.*)

* 'Moral,' however, does come from '*mos*.'—Ed.

So did Irenæus, Tertullian, Lactantius, and Gregory Nazianzen.

Augustine derived διάβολος from δὶς and βόλος. (See EDWARDS *On Truth and Error*, p. 191.) 'That unspeakable spirit of absurdity which always came over even the most sagacious Grecks and Romans the moment they meddled with etymology.' (NIEBUHR'S *Rome*, vol. i. p. 18, translat. 1828.) The same idea had often struck me.

It was not till the commentators on Shakspere and H. Tooke investigated the English language in its rude state, and traced its changes, that the great importance of *authorities* in etymology was known. Thus Warburton explains *Morris*-pike in Shakspere, by Maurice-pike, because Prince Maurice being the first general of the age, the weapon took its name from him. Farmer, however, found the very word in the same sense in writers long before Prince Maurice; and it is certainly a corruption of Moorish pike, as Morris-dance is of the Moorish dance.

WORDS.

Words depart from their original and precise meaning by almost imperceptible gradations, and it is this ambiguity in language, not the more obvious and gross equivocations of words, that is most dangerous in reasoning. The causes of these aberrations are so various, that they can scarcely be reduced to general heads.

E. g. In buying and selling,* in borrowing and lending, in owing and crediting, there is a great confusion in many languages arising from the loose use of terms. Conduco in Latin means either to let or to hire. So ἄρνυμαι signifies *cupio*, and sometimes *infligo* (EURIP. *Hec.* l. 1064), ἀρνύμενος λώβαν, unless, indeed, it is here used in the sense of

* This remark was made to me by Mr. Powel of Balliol College.

sumere pœnas. But in Homer, E'. 558, it can hardly mean anything but *conferre.* Ἀλλάξαϑ' αἶδα ϑαλάμους, EUR. *Hec.,* 483.

'Cur valle permutem Sabina,
Divitias operosiores?'

To pollute and to expiate, luo, solvo, piaculum, ῥύσιος, all words relating to *price* and *retribution.* 'Passage' signifies the act of passing, and the place of passage. So, διάβασις in Greek. Stipendium, *pay,* and the time of service.

Some of these inaccuracies may be explained on this principle; where the idea conveyed implies two parties, and the context makes it impossible to mistake, either of the parties is denoted by the same word. Chace is thus used in sea language. So convoy, for the fleet protected, the vessel protecting, and the protection afforded. *Rent* and *learn* are often so vulgarly employed.

When greater accuracy is required, as in law-proceedings, Aristotle's rule respecting correlatives (in the Categories, περὶ τῶν πρός τι) is resorted to, viz. words are coined which distinguish one party from the other, while each word expresses the common idea of which they are a modification. *E. g.* Grantor, grantee; mortgagor, mortgagee; lessor, lessee; donor, donee.

'They (the ancient Greeks) had an unwarrantable habit of moulding foreign names to a Grecian form, and giving *them a resemblance to some derivative word in their own tongue.* Thus, they changed the *Gogra* into *Agoranis,* or *a river of the assembly; Uchah* into *Oxydracæ,* or *sharp-sighted,* and *Renas* into *Aornos,* or a *rock inaccessible to birds.* Whence their poets, who delighted in wonders, embellished their works with new images, distinguishing regions and fortresses by properties which existed only in imagination.' (Sir WILLIAM JONES, vol. i. p. 176.) So the Isle of Thanet, which comes from *Tau,* Celtic for *region;* and the diminutive *et,* is called *Athanatos* by Solinus.

Words strongly metaphorical in their origin sometimes become naturalised in their secondary sense, so as to lose all apparent connection with the primary one, and to be considered as *proper* words. *E. g. Talent, edify.**

Mr. D. Stewart has remarked that it is *well* when a word metaphorical in its origin has by use become so familiar in its secondary sense, that we lose all consciousness of its primary sense: the mind attends to the reasoning better, and is less likely to make mistakes. But what is gained by the understanding is lost by the imagination. Still more is it useful, when the name is borrowed from an *accidental quality*. *E. g.* Money is called a *common measure*. So it is; but that is not its essence; and the name misleads people often, making them think it is the essence. It is of the essence of money to possess intrinsic value. That language is the most philosophical which exhibits in the similarity of its words the connection of the ideas denoted by the words, or, as Aristotle would say, abounds in παρώνυμα, *cognate* words. All languages have this quality more or less. There is none so barbarous as to be wholly without it; there is none so philosophical as to exemplify the character which Bishop Wilkins designed in his essay on a real character.

The Greek, perhaps, approaches the nearest of any to it. ποσὸς, ποιότης. Till Cicero's time the Latin had no word to express the latter idea; he therefore *framed* a word, on this principle, from *qualis*, 'qualitas.' The English has not to this day a word to express the former idea. We say, *what sort*, for ποῖος. From τέλος in Greek, comes τέλειος. In Latin *finis* and *perfectio*. In English *end* and *perfect*. In these two languages the affinity between the ideas is not expressed in the names of those ideas, and probably is not

* On the use of the word 'edify,' see Bishop HINDS' *Three Temples*.—ED.

perceived by the generality of men. In Greek even the vulgar must have felt it; and it prepares the way for understanding the most abstruse reasonings in philosophy.

Aristotle, however, confesses that some anomalies exist in the Greek language where one might expect παρώνυμα: *e. g.* σπουδαῖος for the man who possesses ἀρετὴ (Categor.: περὶ ποιότητος). But he says they are not many.

The verbal nouns in Greek are a great help to accurate thinking and reasoning. Thus, νόησις and νόημα are both rendered in English by 'thought;' whereas, the first is *the act of thinking*; the second, *the thing thought*. So αἴσθησις and αἴσθημα. The latter word, as well as the former, is rendered by Cudworth, *sensation*. Hence an awkwardness of expression arises, where he says that *a sensation* seems *to be* a corporeal thing really existing without the *soul*. (*Immut. Moral.*, p. 118). An αἴσθημα does, but an αἴσθησις does not. Presently after he uses *sensation* for the 'perception of a thing as existing without us.' (P. 119.)

The same author, aware of the difference between νόησις and νόημα, translates the first, *intellection*, the second, *conception*. (P. 131.) Here it is evident that the latter word had, by frequent use, lost, in his contemplation of it, its *verbal sense*, and was become a mere name; but the former, not being so much in use, still retained its *verbal* or *active* sense.

Words apparently *synonymous*, and really so in the great majority of cases, have nevertheless each an appropriated meaning, which on certain occasions is made to appear. This propriety of meaning is known *à priori* by the scholar, who is acquainted with the Etymology of the word; but the person who has collected its meaning only from its use is ever liable to mistakes, and often to the most ridiculous mistakes, because perhaps in the course of his experience it has never been used in such a manner as to demonstrate its peculiar

signification. *E. g. Benevolence* and *Philanthropy* are frequently synonymous; they might nine times out of ten be substituted for one another, and an illiterate person, recollecting that each term is applied to characters and actions of kindness, mercy, and humanity, will indiscriminately use them, even when that humanity is shown towards the brute creation—than which mistake nothing could be more ludicrous. So 'Premature' for 'False.' '*Tenacious* of advertising.'

Most of the words which have an obscene or filthy sense annexed to them were originally *general* terms, including that sense along with many others, to which people had recourse, rather than give a direct and proper name.

In process of time, however, these words having been long used in the *particular* sense, became just as offensive as direct names; and then the same expedient was again tried. From a principle of modesty and delicacy some *general* term was sought for, not yet so appropriated as to excite disgust, but which must soon undergo the same fate. For an example, see Horne Tooke on the word *dung*, and the examples from the old translation of the Bible here given. (See also CICERO, *Epp. Fam.* 9, 22, *ad Pœtum.*)

Object, being often used for object of charity, is by the vulgar understood to mean a person in *extreme wretchedness*, and by some is felt as a term of reproach.

See JANI, *Notitia vocum Latinæ Linguæ olim honestarum nunc inhonestarum.* Dresdæ, 1726, 8vo. Among these words are factio, factiosus, fur, hæresis, hostis, latro, leno, magus, obsequium, comitas, elegans, fœnerator, nebulo, parasitus, scurra, sophista, tyrannus.

Words which by use have become general appellatives, although originally only of some particular or accidental circumstance, soldier (from solidarius), premises, date, patent, brief, brevet, breviary, chancel, cancel, fine, lease, carpenter, post, stationer. Ἡλικία originally meant a class

of *equals* in age, or equality in age. Being most commonly used for persons in the prime of life, it soon became confined to them, and at length acquired the sense of *youth*, vigour, beauty—the attributes of youth. In the New Test., Matthew vi. 27, it is used for *stature*. (Vid. HAMMOND'S *Annot.* in loc.)

Compassion, literally *sympathy*. In this sense it is used by Cudworth. (*Immutable Morality*, book iii. c. 1, p. 81.) 'These sensitive cogitations are not pure actions springing from the soul itself, but *compassion* with the body.' Hence *compatible* for congruous, congenial.

General terms by use appropriated to a good or bad sense.

Good.	*Bad.*
Presumptio (πρόληψις) in the classical age.	Presumptio, in the lower Latin.
Experimental.	Fatal.
Yeoman, from young man;* so Παῖς, *puer*, for servant.	Impertinent.
	Valetudo.
	Object.
	Patient.
	Instigate.
	Accomplice.
	Emissary.
	Plausible.
	Empirical.

The names of the categories in Greek being *concrete*, are more philosophical than those of the schoolmen in Latin, which are *abstract*. *E.g.* τὸ ποῖον, τὸ πόσον instead of ποιότης, ποσότης, qualitas, quantitas, ut. The evil of the latter consists in their encouraging a fancy that these *accidents* can subsist separately from the things themselves.

* Some think it is *good*-man.—ED.

AMBIGUITY.

We are all prone to use words vaguely, and, therefore, *ambiguously*. People, however, are generally open to conviction on this point, provided the several senses be made to appear. But when once the ambiguity has been sanctioned by a didactic or scientific work, the error is riveted. Thus, *certainty of object* being adopted as a logical notion, it passes for an indisputable truth, whereas it is only an extension, or an abuse, of the word *certain*. The *latitude* of a word's signification is equally fallacious with its *ambiguity*, or rather it is one species of ambiguity. *E. g.* Worth, work, action, passion, disease, duty.

Mistakes and fallacies arise from supposing that the word we now use always had the same sense it now has. Stillingfleet has some excellent remarks on this in his *Irenicum*, part 2, c. 6, § 3. *E. g. Missa*, which originally was the last word of the service, (ite, missa est),* came at length to be applied (not simply to the *service*, but) to one more solemn part of it; for the communion being administered to a selected portion, a second dismissal was necessary for *these*, and the word thus became appropriated to the *Communion service*. The same holds of *Homilies, Bishop, liturgy*, and *Priests, Altars*, &c., which gave rise to the sacrifice of the Mass.

In Book ii. c. 2, of the *Wealth of Nations*, a remarkable ambiguity seems to exist in the use of the word *circulating*, and to cause some confusion in the writer's statement, particularly in pages 446, 447. The ambiguity consists in using it at one time in a *transitive*, at another in a *neutral* sense. In the former sense, money is a circulating capital, because its office is to distribute, or *circulate*

* Some think it is *Mess*; *i. e.* Cœna.—Ed.

the produce of land and labour. Here circulate is *transitive.* But the phrase *circulating capital* is before constantly employed in the *neutral* sense; viz. as that capital *which is circulated,* or turned over from hand to hand. Dr. Smith compares money to *fixed capital,* inasmuch as it circulates commodities, like a wheel or other machine. And on this ground he proceeds to demonstrate the advantage of paper money, which he compares to an improvement in machinery or fixed capital, being a cheaper method of doing the same thing. The language here is hardly consistent with that before used, p. 447, where money is called part of the *circulating capital,* unless we understand *circulating* in a *transitive* sense, not in the sense which the phrase bears in the beginning of the chapter.

In fact, money ought not to have been reckoned as part of circulating capital. It is an equivocation of the word *circulating.* In p. 441, he says:—'The fixed capital, and that part of the circulating capital which consists in money, so far as they affect the revenue of the Society, bear a very great resemblance to one another.' They resemble one another *in all essential points,* and therefore ought to have been classed together. The mistake, I have no doubt, was caused by the ambiguity of the verb to *circulate* noticed above.

When once a word has slid from its first meaning, so as to cover *other* ideas besides that, it is very difficult to recall it. Men immediately set about accounting for this *comprehension* of different things under the same appellation; and nothing can convince them but that there is some *common nature* which answers to it. The *word* clings to its new *idea* as a man does to his estate, and, instead of quitting it, ransacks heaven and earth for a *title.* It is here too, as it is with estates, *possession is nine points of the law.*

See an admirable example of a person puzzled by the

various senses of a word, which he is vainly striving to include under one general notion, in Stewart's *Elem.*, vol. ii. p. 213, from Montesquieu's use of the word *Law*.

This attempt at retaining all the senses of the same word as one object of the mind, fatiguing as it is and requiring some dexterity, is not unlike the action of the balancer who keeps up half a dozen balls at the same time.

LOGIC.

Logic is properly an art of *language*. It has nothing to do with reasoning except as expressed in *words*. All the remarks in Watts' *Logic* about the causes of *false judgment* are quite irrelevant to the subject. They belong as much to politics or painting as to Logic.

D. Stewart's sketch of a 'Rational System of Logic' (*Human Mind*, vol. i. p. 44), comprehends not only Dialectic, but the laws of *investigation*, the division and classification of the objects of human knowledge; in short, almost the whole province of the philosophy of the mind.

Duval, in his *Synopsis of Aristotle*, p. 79, says:— 'Cum mens certis instituitur præceptionibus et regulis *ad veritatis cognitionem* sive quod idem est, dum Artem callet *benè disserendi.*' This is a confusion, sanctioned, indeed, in some measure by Aristotle himself, who, however, seems to have had a clear notion of the distinct provinces of *philosophy* and *argument*. The greatest fault in his Dialectical treatises is the confusion of *cause* with *reason*. The object of a syllogism is to show the necessary *connection* of the premises and the conclusion. Hence, the Greek particle ἄρα is a more proper word to introduce the conclusion than *ergo*. It denotes the *consistency* and *fitness* of the parts. Hence, also, συνομολογουμένα, συμφωνεῖ, συνᾴδει, ἀκόλουθα, and other words of that description applied to reasoning. *Sequitur*, though not so philosophical as these, is better than *efficitur*.

Dr. Campbell, in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric,* takes a very erroneous view of the Scholastic Logic. In the Introduction, p. 11, he says:—'Logic whose end is *the discovery of truth* is founded on the doctrine of the understanding.' This is truly the end of the *Baconian Logic,* or the method of Induction, but not of the Aristotelian, or Dialectic. From the use made of the word *logical* and *illogical* in the same treatise, one may collect that the author had in general the right notion in his mind of the nature of Logic, although when he writes expressly on the subject he is always in error. Thus, in p. 350: 'But the patrons of this practice will probably plead, that as the French is the finer language, ours must certainly be improved by the mixture. Into the truth of the hypothesis from which they argue, I shall not now inquire. It sufficeth for my present purpose to observe, that the consequence is not *logical,* though the plea were just. A liquor produced by the mixture of two liquors of different qualities, will often prove worse than either.'

Here he calls the consequence 'not logical' because it silently assumes as granted a premiss which is not true, viz. *Whatever is mixed with some thing better than itself is improved by it.* If instead of the form of an enthymeme, that of a syllogism had been used, Campbell would not have called the reasoning *illogical*—he would have denied one of the premises.

There is no just ground for the distinction which Stewart makes between mathematical reasoning and all other reasoning. The true nature is admirably expressed, *Elem.*, vol. ii. p. 152. (4to.)

But he absurdly contrasts the method and object with that pursued in other *sciences.* This is confounding *investigation* with *reasoning.* In a note, p. 153, he quotes, with approbation, Mr. Prevost, who says that Mathematics is on this very account a science of *pure reasoning,* by which he admits that *reasoning,* properly so called, consists in this very

process. Wherever reasoning enters into the other sciences it is of this kind. But they consist also of investigation; and in morals (but more especially in law) the investigation is chiefly conversant with the meaning of words.

SYLLOGISM.

It is absurdly objected against the form of syllogism that it presupposes more to be known than the conclusion it aims to establish. Campbell, in his *Rhetoric*, joins in this charge. But he might as well object to the structure of the human mind, which invariably pursues this order [*i. e.* from generals to particulars], when desirous of establishing a particular position. Is it any objection to Cuvier's argument against the existence of the fabulous Bull of Agatharcides, that he adduces a proposition containing a universal truth? His argument is this:

No real animal has cloven hoofs and horns, and also teeth adapted for cutting and devouring animal food.

The bull of Agatharcides has cloven, &c.;

Therefore the bull of Agatharcides is not a real animal. (JAMESON'S *Cuvier*, p. 77.)

The chapter in Locke's Essay on Reason is the weakest and most ignorant attack on Syllogism that was ever penned. At least, the persons against whom he writes must have had most erroneous notions of its nature, if ever they represented it as the means of acquiring knowledge, and extending our acquaintance with the nature of things.

Some variations of Syllogism ought to be *taught* in treatises of Logic, as legitimate forms of reasoning, because of their convenience and frequent use: the *force* of them being always deduced (in the first instance) from the '*Dictum de omni et nullo.*' Such are Hypotheticals, Disjunctives, Dilemma, &c. These resemble in their character the *Data* of Euclid, which are an exposition of such facts as are necessarily concomitant upon others already established; and, to

save the trouble of a tedious deduction (whenever occasion may require the use of them), their necessary connection with the prior facts being demonstrated once for all, they are then considered as *fixed principles* equally with the other.

Syllogism is the crucible in which we decompose words, and detect their ambiguity; which, when they are employed in all the admitted looseness and irregularity of expression, escapes notice. Whenever such ambiguity is suspected in a principal term, the simple expedient is, to construct a syllogism containing the term, and it will appear instantly whether any foreign admixture adheres to its import.—*E. g.*

What happens every day is not improbable:

Some improbabilities happen every day:

Therefore some improbabilities are not improbable.

Here we are sure that the conclusion is not true—for it is a contradiction in terms—and yet the form is regular. There must, therefore, be an ambiguity.* Either the phrase 'happen every day' is ambiguous, or the term *improbable* is not used in the same sense in the premises and in the conclusion.

1. If by the middle term is meant *a class of things which happen daily,* no one improbability can be said to belong to that class; and in this sense the minor premiss is false. Or, 2ndly, *improbable* may in the major premiss relate to an *assertion* or *opinion,* and in the conclusion to a *thing.* 'That some improbabilities happen every day is true, and therefore.'

Principles are acquired by induction, but if used *syllogistically,* generate new truths. Thus, Sir I. Newton reasons downwards from the laws of light and matter to the solution of minor phenomena. Thus, Bentley and Porson, from the metrical canon they elicited, deduce corrections of the texts in words at variance with that canon.

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* *i. e.* Supposing you admit—as most persons would—the truth of each premise, taken separately.—ED.

LOGOMACHY.

'Les disputes des *mots* sont toujours des disputes de *choses;* car tous les gens de bonne foi conviendront qu'ils ne tiennent à tel ou tel mot que par préférence pour telle ou telle idée; comment les expressions habituellement employées dans les rapports les plus vulgaires pourroient-elles inspirer des sentiments généreux.' (DE STAEL, *L'Allemagne,* vol. iii. p. 178.) This is true of those words which relate to human conduct, history, and passions: but not of those which regard *science* alone. And much confusion arises from a notion, that when we use the same word we always mean the same thing.

Locke, in reasoning against innate ideas, perpetually confounds *words* with *things,* or *definitions* expressed in words with the truths denoted by them. (See an excellent letter on this subject, by M. Allamand to Gibbon, GIBBON'S *Miscell. Works,* vol. i. p. 436, 8vo.)

TIME.

One of the commonest errors is to regard *time* as an *agent.* But in reality *time does* nothing, and *is* nothing. We use it as a compendious expression for all those causes which operate slowly and imperceptibly; but, unless some positive cause is in action, no change takes place in the lapse of 1000 years: *e.g.* a drop of water encased in a cavity of silex.

The most intelligent writers are not free from this illusion. For instance, Simond, in his *Switzerland,* speaking of a mountain scene, says, 'The quarry from which the materials of the bridge came is just above your head, and the miners are still at work—air, water, frost, weight, and *time.*' (Vol. i. p. 33.) Thus, too, those politicians who object to any positive enactments affecting the Constitution, and who

talk of the gentle operation of time, and of our Constitution itself being the work of time, forget that it must be human *agency* all along which is the efficient cause. *Time* does nothing.

SABBATH.

Calamy's account of the manners and discipline of Utrecht, where he studied in 1688, speaks of the disregard of the Lord's Day, as a day of cessation from labour, or traffic, or pleasure. 'Neither the French nor Dutch,' he says, 'used to confine themselves on the Lord's Days, except in time of public worship, and the English were too apt to grow like them.' (*Life of Calamy*, vol. i. p. 146.) To this the Editor subjoins a note: 'This unsabbatical observance of the Lord's Day, the well-known practice of Calvin, he has ably defended, as a Christian, in opposition to a Judaical observance. (See CALVIN, *Institut.*, lib. ii. c. 8, § 32–34.')

In another note, p. 147, the Editor says:—'The foreign Calvinists of the 17th century, with whom agreed the Lutherans, objected to their English brethren's 'doctrines of the Sabbath,' which sundry Divines of the United Provinces entitled *figmentum Anglicanum*, as related by Cotton Mather, in his *Life of Elliott* (1694), p. 29.'

In the notes to *Burton's Diary*, vol. ii. p. 262, &c., are some very curious particulars connected with this subject: *e. g.* the emigrants to Newhaven, in 1637, upon the first settlement of their colony, enacted, under severe penalties, as follows:—

'No one shall run on the sabbath-day, or walk in his garden, or elsewhere, except reverently to and from Meeting.'

'No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, or shave, on the sabbath-day.'

'No woman shall kiss her child on the sabbath or fasting day.'

See PALEY'S *Mor. Phil.*, book v. c. 7.

SERMONS.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE BISHOP TO A FRIEND, ON THE SUBJECT OF WARBURTON'S WORK.

'Kilvert's Publication (*Remains of Bishop Warburton*) has my entire good wishes. . . . . Warburton's imperfect Book, the last of those published, always struck me as more valuable than all the rest. One single idea, which he meant to expand,—that according to the very essence of the doctrine of Redemption through Christ, Moses *could not* have led the Jews to expect immortal life as the reward of obedience—is so simple—apparently so obvious—that, from the moment I read it, I was astonished at the universal cry against his argument, which the herd of common-place Divines, in his own time, and ever since, have raised. I was bold enough, or, as some people said, rash enough, to vindicate this very position in my University Sermons, when Provost of Oriel; and I have more than once thought I would close my literary life by working out this argument which Warburton left unfinished. These papers will probably do the thing that I thought of; and of course do it more thoroughly and effectually.'

SERMONS.

SERMON I.

THE PROMISE OF THE LIFE THAT NOW IS.

1 Tim. iv. 8.

'For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'

ONE of the happiest effects of the preaching of the Gospel undoubtedly is, that, the doctrine of immortality and a future retribution being firmly established, we are enabled to reconcile all the inequalities of God's Providence in this life. And the utmost we can suffer here is so entirely disproportionate to the rewards of eternity, that a sincere believer is enabled to bear up even against death itself, without any abatement of that confidence which he is taught by his religion to place in the justice and mercy of God.

According to the well-known argument of a great writer of our Church, Bishop Warburton, the common or ordinary Providence of God, without the doctrine of a future state, is not sufficient to keep men stedfast in religious belief; and, consequently, whenever this doctrine was wanting, as in the Mosaic dispensation, the people were necessarily kept in a sense of their dependence on God by an *extraordinary* Providence—dispensing temporal rewards and punishments in

so striking and regular a manner as to convince them of the will and power of the Almighty. But when the christian revelation was completed, these temporal sanctions being no longer necessary, were, as he tells us, entirely superseded by those of future reward and punishment. The latter were not merely called in to support and enforce the former, but were substituted altogether in their room; so that the Christian has no reason to expect any portion of God's favour in this life, by the most exact obedience, more than the unbeliever. The general tendency of virtue to produce happiness, and of vice to cause misery in the constitution of human affairs, I do not understand him to question—but certainly to maintain that, as far as religion is concerned, the Christian cannot expect, as such, a greater degree of blessing in this life than the Jew or the Heathen.

It is far from my intention to combat the leading argument which this great writer maintains, nor do I think the strictures which I mean now to offer will at all invalidate his main reasoning. That the promise of this life belonged to the obedient Jew, and the promise of a future life to the believing Christian, as distinguishing marks of the two dispensations—that the wisdom and power of God are strikingly conspicuous in the conduct and gradual development of this scheme—that this view of the subject contributes to explain and harmonise the whole of the sacred Writings—and that it furnishes a convincing proof of the divine legation of the Jewish lawgiver, are all positions which he appears to me to have established beyond the reach of contradiction.

But in the support of his favourite theory, he seems to have been led occasionally into statements more strict and peremptory than the truth of Scripture warrants, and sometimes to have advanced positions which, if unqualified, may in their effects become injurious to the cause of religion itself. Of this kind appears to be the doctrine he main-

tains of the *exclusive* privileges of the two covenants—confining absolutely temporal blessings to the one, and eternal blessings to the other.

It is sufficient for every purpose of his argument that the *principal* and *characteristic* feature of the two dispensations should be respectively of this nature; but he is not content with this, and labours strenuously to prove, that with the promise of another life the Mosaic writings have no connection, nor the Christian with those of the present world.

It is a common failing, even of powerful and honest minds, to be led by the heat of controversy to exaggerate a statement favourable to one's own argument; and, where an important distinction is to be pointed out between two things commonly confounded, to heighten the contrast by every artifice of rhetoric as well as reasoning. And I cannot but suspect that a weakness of this sort operated in the instance under consideration.

In the first place, sufficient allowance does not seem to have been made for the hopes, however indistinct, of another life, entertained by many of the Jewish Church, and exhibited in the Jewish Scriptures. And still more is the promise held out to the faithful followers of Christ in the New Testament reduced by him, and limited to narrower terms than the express language of Scripture justifies.

On the former of these points it is not my purpose now to enlarge. Indeed the learned writer himself does not push this proposition to the full extent to which he carries the other; admitting that many patriarchs and prophets were favoured by special revelation with a view of that better country of which the Body of the People were wholly ignorant, and which formed no part of the national religion.* But he contends, without limitation, that the Christian has no right to expect temporal blessings on the ground of any

* See *Lessons on Religious Worship*, L. iii.—Ed.

passage in Scripture; and to the discussion of this point our present attention will be principally confined.

In the part of his work which treats most professedly of this subject he puts the following question:—'Does the Gospel disclaim in stronger terms its being a *temporal kingdom*, when Christ says his kingdom is not of this world, than it disclaims *temporal sanctions*, when it says, 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution' (2 *Tim.* iii. 12), or than it disclaims an *extraordinary providence*, when it declares that the Jews had the promise of the life that now is, and the Christians of that which is to come (1 *Tim.* iv. 8)?'—WARB. vol. iii. p. 124. The latter declaration he founds upon my present text, 'Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;' and he proceeds to vindicate this interpretation, applying the first clause to the Jews and the latter to the Christians (which appears to me to be an arbitrary and gratuitous distinction), in the following manner.

St. Paul, he says, is enforcing the advantages of moral above ritual observances, in opposition to certain Judaizing Christians, and means by the text just recited, 'that although numerous ritual observances were enjoined by the Law, and some there must needs be under the Gospel, yet they are of little advantage in comparison of *moral virtue;* for that, under both religions, the rewards proper to each were annexed only to godliness; that is to say, under the Jewish, the reward of the life that now is, under the Christian, of that which is to come.'

Now, upon examining the chapter, it will be found that this first view of the case, is by no means a fair representation. St. Paul is not merely instructing Timothy in points of doctrine which he is to deliver, but he is earnestly exhorting him as an individual to the exercise of godliness in the pure and enlarged sense of the word, and he accompanies

his exhortation by such motives as seem most powerful and impressive. 'The foolish stories of the Judaizing teachers reject, but exercise thyself unto godliness (γύμναζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν).' And the verse which follows seems evidently to bear this meaning: 'For the bodily mortification which the Jewish fables are framed to recommend is attended with little advantage; but the exercise of godliness, that is, the practice of piety and morality, is profitable for advancing all our interests, temporal and eternal.'—*Macknight.*

Still further to enforce his advice, he immediately describes himself as being animated with the same conviction: 'For therefore *we* both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.' (1 *Tim.* iv. 10.)

Now the tenor of this, as of many other epistles, is to prove that the dispensation of the Law is superseded by that of the Gospel; that what is peculiar to the former is either done away, or perfected and swallowed up in the latter. If, then, this promise of temporal blessing were a transient part of the Law, already abrogated, how could it be introduced, in the way we find it is by St. Paul, as a motive for the exercise of godliness? And if it be not abrogated, who shall dare to diminish aught upon his own authority from the revealed will of God?

If we examine, too, the words of the following verse already quoted, the same conclusion seems to follow, that even in this life the favour and protection of God may be expected by the faithful. 'We trust,' says he, 'in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.' In what sense, then, is He their Saviour? merely by granting them eternal salvation? But how, then, could He be called the Saviour of *all* men? And still more, how could He be said to be the Saviour *especially* of those that believe? What ground could exist for this distinction, unless we suppose the Apostle to mean that the mercy of God

is extended to all men even in this life, but more especially to sincere Christians?

The author of *The Divine Legation,* however, in order to give a demonstrative proof that his interpretation must be right, and that temporal rewards are foreign to the nature of the christian economy, appeals to the declaration made by St. Paul to the Corinthians: 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' (1 *Cor.* xv. 19.) Having observed that St. Paul is here addressing himself to Jewish converts tainted with Sadducism, he supposes him to reason with them in this manner: 'You deny a resurrection from the dead, or a future state of reward and punishment. And why? because there is no such doctrine in the Law? How do you prove it? Because the sanctions of the Law are temporal rewards and punishments. Agreed. And now, on your own principle, I confute your conclusion. You own that the Jews had an *equivalent* for future rewards and punishments, namely, the present. But Christians have no equivalent. So far from that, they are, with regard to this world only, of all men most miserable; having, therefore, no *equivalent* for the rewards of a future state, they must needs be entitled to them.' 'From hence it appears,' he adds, 'not only that the Christians *had not,* but that the Jews *had* the promise of the life that now is.' (WARB. vol. iii. p. 155.)

Seldom, perhaps, has a case occurred more illustrative of the common remark, that a mind prepossessed with a favourite hypothesis is apt to strain and distort every fact into a conformity with it. Whoever reads the 15th chapter to the Corinthians, divested of this prejudice, cannot fail, I think, of seeing that the Apostle's reasoning is by that construction entirely perverted. His object is to enforce the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead, as a necessary consequence of the Resurrection of Christ; and this fact, the Resurrection of Christ, had been attested by numerous eye-

witnesses, who could not possibly be deceived, of which number he himself was one. And, as they could not be deceived themselves, so had they no motive for deceiving others. If *in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable.* We, who go about declaring these things, as being what we have ourselves witnessed, are everywhere reviled and persecuted. It is absurd, therefore, to think that we should forge this account, or deliver it at all if it were not a great and important truth. That WE, in this passage, means the Apostles and preachers of the Gospel, not the whole body of converts, is still further evident from the separate mention St. Paul makes of the converts whom he is addressing, and of those who had died for the faith. He reasons on the absurd consequence of denying the Resurrection in three distinct ways:—1st. *If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins;* 2ndly. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished;* and 3rdly. *If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most wiserable.* (1 *Cor.* xv. 17–19.)

The same personal argument is pursued presently after with still more distinctness: 'And why stand WE in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?' (*Ibid.* verse 30.)

Since, then, this passage from the Corinthians is declared by the author of *The Divine Legation* himself to be the main support of that interpretation of the text which denies to Christians any benefit in 'the life that now is;' and since, upon a close examination, the meaning of this passage is found to be widely different from that which he would have it bear, we must needs return to the plain and obvious construction which strikes the mind of every unbiassed reader.

In prosecution, however, of his argument, the same author considers other texts of Scripture which are commonly understood to announce God's blessing even in this life upon good men, and endeavours to deprive them altogether of that meaning. Thus St. Peter had said, in order to quiet the excessive fears which some members of the Church entertained of persecution: 'Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?' (1 *Pet.* iii. 13.)

This passage he declares to be merely equivalent to that saying of our Lord: 'Fear not them which kill the body; but rather fear him which is able to destroy body and soul in hell' (*Matt.* x. 28); and to this saying he supposes St. Peter to allude.

Now the two texts, even when taken as single propositions, are plainly of a different force and character. Our Saviour admits that wicked men may cause us much evil in this life, but He bids us think nothing of this in comparison of that evil which the displeasure of God will bring upon us. St. Peter's proposition is, that men will be less disposed to do us harm, if we be followers of that which is good. Our Saviour is fortifying his disciples against those persecutions which will attend them because of their faith. St. Peter contends that the more exemplary their lives, the less liable will they be to persecution.

The author of *The Divine Legation*, indeed, proceeds to vindicate his interpretation in the following manner:—'The Apostle,' he says, 'as if he had it in his thoughts to guard against this absurd vision of *temporal sanctions*, immediately subjoins, But if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye.' (WARB. iii. 125.)

The appeal here made to the context for such a purpose is most extraordinary. Instead of confirming the sense he is desirous of putting on the former verse, the verse which follows must be considered, according to every rule of

criticism and philosophy, as decisive the other way. 'But and if ye suffer,' 'αλλ' εἰ καὶ πάσχοιτε διὰ δικαιοσύνην, μακάριοι—but *even* if ye do suffer—*but although* ye should suffer. The force of this connective is to introduce something opposite to what has gone before. Now the interrogative sentence, 'Who is he that will harm you?' we have considered to mean the same as 'men *will not* harm you.' And thus, if any doubt could be entertained whether it had that force in the writer's mind, the very next clause, introduced by the words, 'But even if,' determines the question, for the idea that 'men *will* harm us,' is immediately treated as an *opposite* supposition.

Of the other texts alleged in favour of temporal blessing, and which the same author attempts to explain away in a manner favourable to his own hypothesis, the following are the most remarkable:—'I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.' (*Matt.* xviii. 19.) 'And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.' (*Matt.* xix. 29.) 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' (*Matt.* vi. 33.) And again, 'If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.' (*John* xiv. 14.)

In answer to this he observes, 'That *all* does not signify all simply, but all of one kind; and of what kind the context must direct us to determine. When, therefore, the members of Christ's spiritual kingdom are promised they shall obtain *all* they ask, this *all* must needs be confined to *things spiritual.*' (WARB. vol. iii. p. 126.) By means of this distinction, one or two of the texts above recited may be overcome, but the others must, by virtue of this very distinction, retain the sense of *things temporal.* 'Seek ye first the kingdom of

God, and his righteousness; and *all* these things shall be added unto you.' Here the things specified are expressly distinguished from things spiritual, and, therefore, to get rid of these texts also, he has recourse to another rule of interpretation—'that all the promises of *extraordinary* blessings, made to the first propagators of the Gospel, are not to be understood as extending to their successors of all ages, or to the Church in general.' Nothing can be more indisputable than this rule; but it is strange that so acute a reasoner should fancy that it serves to demonstrate his interpretation of these texts to be right, and his adversary's to be wrong. The promises contained in them *may possibly* be among those confined to the first preachers of the Gospel; but he has not proved nor attempted to prove that they *are* so; and, till that is done, there is no reason why we should incline to a sense which is most at variance with the literal expression.

It is remarkable, too, that in another instance, already discussed, where St. Paul uses the expression, 'We are of *all* men most miserable,' and where the context proves that what he is saying applies to himself and the other Apostles, not even comprehending the body of Corinthian converts whom he is addressing, Bishop Warburton should have entirely overlooked this distinction; and, because his argument required it, should have extended this declaration of St. Paul, so as to embrace not only the early churches who might be exposed to persecution, but the whole christian Church throughout all ages. For, upon this single passage, it will be remembered, he grounded his novel interpretation of the text, that Godliness has no longer the promise of the life that now is, since the Jewish dispensation has been done away.

It must, indeed, strike every reader of the New Testament that Christians are anxiously taught to extend their views to another life—to consider themselves as strangers and pilgrims on the earth—as having here no continuing city—to

regard the troubles of this life as slight irregularities, which a future retribution will correct; and which, since they are the earnest of great rewards to follow, may be made the subject even of praise and exultation. And who that reflects on the early history of our Church can be surprised at this? Who can wonder at these repeated exhortations to the newly-converted brethren, when every earthly terror was about to surround them, by which their faith and constancy would be tried? It is not against this character in the scheme of Christianity that any part of our present reasoning is directed. Nor would it be right to weaken the impression of such arguments by leading men to expect worldly advantages as the natural and regular consequences of Godliness. But we cannot consent to surrender those plain and merciful encouragements to a religious life, although they may be of the lower kind, which our Saviour and his Apostles appear to hold out, merely because a different interpretation will serve to round and complete an argument, already sufficiently strong without that support.

Is it necessary, for instance, to confine the meaning of our Saviour to *heavenly* blessings, when He expressly says: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the *earth*'? (*Matt.* v. 5.) Such a construction has, we know, been attempted, but it tends to discredit all religion thus to extort a sense directly opposite to the literal and obvious import of the passage. The words are taken from the 37th Psalm, the whole tenor of which is, that we ought not to be fretful and impatient under adversity, but trust that the Lord will favour those who are resigned and peaceable, and who steadily put their trust in Him. But, according to the fancy of some interpreters, this verse in the Sermon on the Mount will mean no more than that which presently after follows: 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' (*Matt.* v. 10.) No words, however, can be more strongly contrasted than the two sentences

are in the sublime simplicity of the original. *Μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς· ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσι τὴν γῆν*·——*Μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης· ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.* That better and brighter recompense is promised to those who stand most in need of encouragement, and so transcendent is the nature of this reward, that it is continued and enforced in still more emphatic terms. 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.' (*Matt.* v. 11, 12.)

Now, as we cannot admit that the meaning of these two beatitudes is the same; so neither can it be imagined that the first would have been retained out of the Jewish Scriptures, if its temporal force was now about to be entirely repealed.

After the same manner we find St. Peter earnestly exhorting the converts to a meek and peaceable behaviour, as most likely to secure to them God's favour and protection even in the present life. The course of his reasoning, and its connection with our present argument, will, I apprehend, be best perceived after a recital of the whole passage. 'Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye.' (1 *Pet.* iii. 8–14.)

The foregoing part of this passage, which consists chiefly

of an extract from the 34th Psalm, evidently inculcates the duty of practising a mild and inoffensive conduct, on the ground that it secures the happiness of the present life, by procuring to us the favour and protection of God; and towards the close the Apostle as plainly adds, that such a conduct commonly also is found to disarm the malice of men. In this view it may be considered as a commentary or a paraphrase of the saying of our Saviour: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.' But, when proceeding to the consideration of those trials which it must be the lot of many to undergo for the sake of the faith, after the example of our Blessed Lord's same discourse, *he* also rises both in the strength of the motives which he sets before them, and in the warmth and energy of his language: 'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy;' ἵνα χαρῆτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι, leaping for joy, or transported with joy, at the greatness of the reward which those sufferings shall have procured.

Although we admit, then, that afflictions in this world must be the lot of many good and pious men, yet it seems to be a doctrine both dangerous in its tendency, and not warranted by Holy Scripture, that God's Providence will not be exerted in any especial manner for the sake of those who believe in Him, and who earnestly implore his protection. Undoubtedly we are taught and commanded to address ourselves to Him in time of need; and shall we be told that these petitions are of no avail, or that God lends not a more willing ear to the supplications of his faithful servants, than to the worldly-minded wishes of those who disregard his word?

It will be no answer to this to say that riches and honour in this life are not real blessings, and therefore that they are

not the proper rewards to be expected from an all-wise Providence. We readily allow that in themselves they are of a doubtful nature, and become good or evil according to the mind of him who possesses them. But so says philosophy no less than religion.

> Hæc
> Perinde sunt ut illius animus qui ea possidet;
> Qui uti scit, ei bona, illi qui non utitur recte, mala.

And so declares, in words equally explicit, a Jewish moralist, the wise Son of Sirach: 'All these things are for good to the godly; so to the sinners they are turned into evil.' (*Ecclûs.* xxxix. 27.) But this does not constitute the question upon which we are now discoursing. Whatever may be the means and helps towards happiness in this life, the question is, whether the christian religion forbids us to expect or pray for these, as any part of our reward.

And here I cannot but remark that the same powerful and learned writer seems to have contracted his notion too much of the nature of those temporal blessings which, even under the Mosaic dispensation, were promised to the children of Israel. As far as those blessings are of a national kind, they must by their very nature consist of external advantages, wealth, population, fertility, success in war, peace, plenty, and dominion; but by individuals, surely something more than health, and long life, and opulence—some surer and more infallible constituent of human happiness—was expected as the reward of their obedience, even in this life.

The Psalmist, at least, is far from measuring the degree of God's favour by the worldly prosperity of men, when he exclaims that 'a small thing which the righteous hath is better than great riches of the ungodly.' But the full consideration of this subject would lead me too far from my present purpose. It has, I trust, been made to appear that in the dispensation of temporal blessings there is not so entire and

absolute a difference between the Jewish and the Christian economy, as that writer would have us believe; and an inquiry into the *nature* of those temporal blessings which the patriarchs and prophets hoped for under the sanction of the first covenant, would, I apprehend, bring them still nearer together; a consequence this which I should not urge without hesitation, were I not convinced that the learned writer's argument, when deprived of this adscititious aid, still remains solid and unshaken, and that the cause of truth never suffers more than when the indiscreet zeal of an advocate, or his fondness for theory, tempts him to warp plain facts and authorities, in order to support it, and even to insinuate that we must either adopt his interpretation, or at once abandon our faith. The writer himself is indeed assisted in the conduct of his reasoning by drawing his lines of distinction thus broadly, and to the mind of the reader his argument assumes a more attractive form, as being thus more easily grasped and better remembered; but, in questions of such high moment, we have a sacred duty to perform, which removes far out of sight all these arts of composition. In them our prime merit and excellence must always be, to deliver out the pure word of God in simplicity and truth—to be careful not to add anything thereto, as possessing divine authority, and, above all, to diminish nothing from it.

SERMON II.

THE BETTER THINGS.

HEB. xi. 13.

'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.'

HEB. xi. 39, 40.

'And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

'God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.'

THE triumph of faith, in the midst of a corrupt world, is in this epistle set forth by its inspired author not only as an animating example to us who may be exposed to the like trials, but as explanatory also of that scheme of redemption which has been, by the goodness of God, carrying on from the first loss of Paradise to the death and resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ. The whole economy of the Old Testament, both before and after the delivery of the Law by Moses, is represented as having an evident relation to the coming of Christ, in whom are fulfilled all the promises to the patriarchs, all the predictions of the prophets concerning the great deliverance of the people of God, all the typical ordinances of the Levitical law.

Much of this typical adaptation, it is well known, had been already familiar to the Jewish Church; and in the later periods more especially of their history, many had been

accustomed to regard the service of the tabernacle as shadowing out the office and the kingdom of the Messiah.

This belief, though neither popular, nor consistent, nor firm, yet furnished a sufficient basis for that more explicit instruction which St. Paul here pursues, and which he combines, after his accustomed manner, with practical moral precepts of the greatest purity.

These previous opinions and grounds of belief in the minds of those whom he addresses, have been adduced, among many other arguments, to disprove that demonstration which Bishop Warburton thought he had given of the Divine Legation of Moses, from the omission of the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments in his law. And the chapter before us in particular has been thought to contain so plain a recognition of a salvation to come, in all the patriarchs and prophets recorded in the Books of Moses, as must be inconsistent with the notion that Moses purposely kept this doctrine out of sight.

The charge against Bishop Warburton, which harassed him throughout his long life, having been often revived of late, and yet his work being, as it appears to me, one of the strongest bulwarks that has been raised by man in vindication of our common faith, it cannot be a useless task to inquire into the cause of this strange difference of opinion, and to impress more especially on the minds of theological students the true character and limits of his argument, as well as the caution with which it ought to be received.

In the very statement of the question I conceive, as is often the case with controversies of every kind, that a material error is frequently involved. He has been represented as denying that any evidence of belief in a future state is to be found in the Books of the Old Testament; and as holding that Christ first brought this truth to the knowledge of mankind.

Now, in order to set this matter right in the simplest manner, it may be well to give the history of his work, as it first had birth and gradually grew up to maturity in his own mind. He tells us that in 'reading the Law and history of the Jews with all the attention he was able, amongst the many very singular circumstances of that amazing dispensation (from each of which, as he conceived, the *divinity* of its original may be clearly deduced), these two particulars more forcibly struck his observation; *first*, the *omission of the doctrine of a future state* of rewards and punishments in the religion of that people, no instance of the like nature being to be found throughout the whole history of mankind (in all the infinite variety of gentile religions this doctrine ever making a principal and most essential part). The other was no less singular, that the founder of this religion should pretend *his dispensation was to be administered by an extraordinary Providence;* . . . . no lawgiver or founder of religion ever promising the like distinction; and no historian ever daring to record so singular a prerogative.' (Vol. ii. p. 274.) Unaccountable as the *former* circumstance appeared when considered separately, yet when set against the *latter*, a strong light was immediately reflected from it, and not only a reason found for the omission, but that very omission became a proof of the divinity of the religion. That he sought not such a support for his government proved his own certainty of God's supernatural aid; and the fact that his Government did subsist for ages without it, proves the reality of that supernatural aid or extraordinary providence upon which he confidently relied.

Under this view of the subject, it forms one of the most distinct evidences of the truth of Revelation, and, as such, I propose to detain your attention upon it for some time. In following out the plan of his work, indeed, the author is led to embrace the whole history and scheme of God's

dealings with mankind from the Creation to the Gospel of Christ, connecting in his own way the several dispensations, and reasoning upon the grounds and fitness of their several parts, and their adaptation to the nature of man.

It is in the prosecution of this argument that he has incurred the censure of many Divines, and doubtless there are positions of his, and interpretations of Scripture, which may well be disputed or rejected as erroneous. Into some of these it may be my business hereafter to inquire; but for the present it will be the clearest and most useful method to regard his work in that more limited character, as proving the divine Mission of Moses from the absence of that doctrine which was so generally incorporated with all other systems of government.

Of the obvious and apparent omission in the Levitical Law there can be no doubt. It is observed by Divines of all ages; and the solution commonly attempted, 'that under the sanction of temporal rewards and punishments a more spiritual meaning is hid, which in process of time was to be unfolded,' by no means applies to the present question. For we are considering the omission of it not as a defect or blemish in a system of religion, but as a remarkable phenomenon in civil government; the concealment, therefore, of the truth under types by a wise lawgiver is as much to be wondered at as its omission altogether; being a voluntary abandonment of that support, which all other potentates and civil governors had industriously provided.

The first part of Bishop Warburton's treatise, then, consists of an elaborate proof that religion is necessary to the well-being of society, and that the belief in a future state of retribution is necessary to religion, under the ordinary and unequal dispensations of Providence. And this he shows, not only by abstract reasoning on human nature and the frame of civil society, but he enters upon a learned historical inquiry into all the ancient governments of the world, proving

from the most authentic sources that religion, with this doctrine as part of it, was invariably employed as an engine of civil government. He demonstrates not only the care of the legislators in all these cases to propagate the doctrine, but exhibits a vast deal of curious and profound learning in explaining their contrivances for perpetuating this belief and increasing its influence among the body of the people.

From the legislators he proceeds to the philosophers, and shows how, notwithstanding their own infidelity, they all concurred in maintaining the expediency of this doctrine. After an accurate investigation of the rise and the opinions of the several ancient sects, he demonstrates from the character and genius of each school, and from the writings of each man, that none of them did indeed believe the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments; thus adding considerable force to the statement that it was deemed by them all to be an essential prop to civil government.

A further subject of inquiry, and one by no means indifferent to his main argument, is the connection of these several schemes of policy and philosophy with Egypt. To Egypt, as the parent source, are traced both the fundamental principles of policy which were adopted by the wisest lawgivers of Greece, and the tenets of those schools of philosophy which sprung up and flourished among the same people, from the first dawn of literature among them, down to the period of the Augustan age.

The application of these positions to his general reasoning is obvious. Moses, we know, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and yet, unlike every other legislator trained in the same school, he rejects the expedient which forms the basis of their system, seeks no aid from the hopes and fears of a future retribution, but declares plainly to the stubborn race whom he is appointed to govern, that in this life they are to expect the consequences of God's favour

or displeasure, according as they obey the laws he gives them or not.

The second part of his inquiry, which is occupied in proving the actual omission of a future state, in the law of Moses, would not, I conceive, have met with much opposition, had it been strictly confined to an examination of the Levitical law; for the temporal nature of its sanctions, of its blessings and curses, is so manifest, that the fact can hardly be disputed. But under the same title, Law, is included the history of mankind prior to the separation of the people of Israel; the history of man's transgression, by which he forfeited the gift of immortality, and of those gracious communications which God was pleased to make, from time to time, to a succession of patriarchs, by which the hope imparted to our first parents of some future restoration to his favour was kept alive in their minds. This book formed part of the religion which Moses taught his people, and if in this the doctrine of a future state was clearly revealed to them, it could not be said that he rejected entirely that means of enforcing obedience to his laws. Accordingly, it forms the principal charge by the latest, and, I may add, one of the most learned and candid (Faber) of Bishop Warburton's opponents, that he has been a mistaken interpreter of Scripture in regard to the Patriarchal dispensation. Moses, as this very opponent admits, left the doctrine of a future state as he found it (Faber, vol. ii. p. 154); but the belief prevailed in the patriarchal families; it formed part of their religion, and to this religion the law of Moses was *added*, but did not supersede it. Whatever opinions, therefore, the Fathers maintained upon this momentous subject, it must be presumed were handed down to their posterity, and were cherished by the pious and good, as a source of consolation through all the troubles and vicissitudes of this life, and in the hour of death.

It might be inferred from this statement that Bishop Warburton held, against the truth of Scripture and against the express language of our own Church, that the early Fathers looked only to transitory promises. On the contrary, he is frequent and correct in inculcating that they were favoured with special revelations, the object of which was to keep alive the original hope mercifully conveyed to our first parents, even in the sentence which condemned them—'I will put enmity.' In no other sense would these words, he says, have been understood, 'than that the evil spirit which animated the serpent would continue his enmity to the human race: but that man by the divine assistance should be at length enabled to defeat all his machinations.' (Book v. p. 387.) The promise of this ultimate deliverance, God frequently renewed to the righteous patriarchs, in sundry times and in divers manners, with greater or with less degrees of certainty and clearness, once indeed, in the illustrious instance of Abraham, giving a full perception of the intended means; and in all cases, it may be presumed, adapted to the exigencies of the occasion, and to the preservation of that sacred deposit which was in after ages to become the hope and consolation of Israel.

But widely different is this hope from the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments, as taught either in the schools of philosophy, or as springing up naturally in the mind of man, from a consciousness that good and evil is not equitably dispensed in this life. The reasonableness of such an opinion I would not be thought to question, but it was a subject always involved in perplexity and darkness, and never thoroughly brought to light till the resurrection of our Lord. Natural hopes and surmises of the same kind, it is likely the Patriarchs and the Jews of later times might entertain, building them on the same grounds with the rest of mankind; but the revelations made to the Patriarchal

Church pointed to a more definite object—to the recovery of that lost place in God's favour, from which the human race, through the first transgression, had fallen.

Neither does it become us to say how far the patriarchs were instructed in the nature of the dispensation thus partially announced to them. They saw through a glass darkly. It was the trial of their faith *not* to have a clearer vision, for their faith was the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. To suppose them reasoning, therefore, with logical precision from the truth thus partially revealed, inferring the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments as a necessary consequence, and then inculcating the same doctrine upon their children and their friends, so that, in process of time, it must have been the popular belief, although Moses was silent about it in his law; this mode of argumentation, I say, pursued by the antagonists of Warburton, is quite unsuitable to the subject-matter, and is contradicted by many analogous cases and Holy Scripture. They knew, indeed, that God's promises would sooner or later be fulfilled, and this confidence, strong even in death, was felt by every succeeding patriarch, to whom similar revelations were vouchsafed. But the nature and circumstances of that blessed restoration may well be supposed to have been hidden from their eyes. Whether it would be effected by entry into a terrestrial paradise, whether it extended to the whole of mankind, whether it implied a reunion of the soul and body, and a judgment to come both of the just and of the unjust, or an immediate admission of the righteous into heaven, were points about which it may be presumed their minds were not informed, and into which they did not venture anxiously to inquire.

How vague and indistinct the notions may be, even of those who place faith in any supernatural dispensation, is abundantly evident from the example of the first disciples of our Lord, and of those who were most attached to Him, and

who stood highest in his favour. The denial of Peter, who had been present at his Transfiguration, is alone a sufficient instance; and the plaintive confession of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, after his death, 'We trusted that it should have been he who should have redeemed Israel,' plainly shows that the hope had forsaken them when they saw Him expire upon the cross. It is not, then, just reasoning, to argue from *faith* as we do from actual *knowledge*, and to question the sincerity of faith, if all the consequences logically deducible from it do not attend it. 'Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief,' is the language of human nature, to which an echo will be found, at some time or other, in the breast of every believer.

Still we must not suppose, and the illustrious writer of whom we speak is far from supposing, that Moses was ignorant of the great truth which in due time the Redeemer of mankind was to make known. To declare it to the Israelites was no part of his commission. He had, as Warburton observes, to lay the grounds of this belief in that very system of religion which was not designed openly to teach it, but which, serving as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, would, when the promised seed should come, afford the strongest testimony to his person and his office.

In the meantime the gross and carnal ordinances of the Law were shown by a succession of inspired men to contain within them a spiritual meaning; and, as ages rolled on, the dark veil of the earlier prophecies was gradually withdrawn by the latter. In many of these prophetic writings the belief in a future state is clearly conveyed; and the pious effusions of the Psalmist are often inapplicable upon any other supposition. The fact, indeed, is certain that the doctrine was generally received among the Jews long before our Lord's appearance, and that they were fond of interpreting their Sacred Writings in accordance with it. This, however, it will readily be admitted, is not incon-

sistent with the fact contended for, that it formed no part of the religious system taught by Moses. How the belief found its way among them has been variously explained; and very probably Warburton is mistaken in supposing that they derived it from their intercourse with the Gentile world, more especially during the period of the Captivity. His latest opponent (Mr. Faber), who agrees with him that it is not to be found in the Levitical law, regards it as part of the patriarchal religion, in which he conceives it was necessarily involved, though not expressly taught; and since the Levitical law was only *added* to this religion, many traditional opinions of the patriarchs might be retained by the Jews as parts of their religious belief, of which this was one. To others, again, it has seemed probable, and I confess myself to be among the number, that the foundation of the belief is laid in the moral nature of man, from which, and from the consciousness of being accountable for our conduct since this life rarely exhibits a perfect retribution, hopes and fears must needs spring up that a just and benevolent God will, some time or other, correct this inequality. In these hopes and fears (mingled as they necessarily were with much uncertainty), the Jews would partake as well as the rest of mankind; and from the steady faith of their own patriarchs and prophets under the calamities, and in the close of life, they might reasonably draw the same inference.

However this may be, it is a misrepresentation of Bishop Warburton's argument to say, that he denies this belief either to the patriarchs or to the other inspired persons of the Jewish Church; among whom it prevailed in various degrees, proportionate to that disclosure of the method of man's redemption which was imparted to them. In the law of Moses, properly so called, it was not taught. Indeed, it is hardly possible to conceive the existence of a sect such as the Sadducees adhering, as we know they did, to that

law, had the doctrine of a future state been inculcated in it. And the argument by which our Saviour refutes their error, that 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,' applauded as it was by the Pharisees who heard Him, and sound and just as the conclusion undoubtedly is, yet is not deduced from that law of Moses about which the present question turns; it is from a passage of Scripture antecedent to it; and, what is more, it evidently struck the minds of his hearers as being something new.

But although the main outline of this great writer's argument appears to me not only original and important, but impregnable as the truth itself, yet I am far from denying that the work contains many blemishes and many errors. Of his arrogance and offensive petulance towards his opponents, no justification can be attempted. The only extenuation is to be found in the injurious treatment he himself received, and in that keen sense of wrong and ingratitude which a generous mind feels when valuable services are requited with reproach; and when some feeble adversary succeeds, by misrepresentation and clamour, in kindling the passions and prejudices of mankind, in drawing away their attention from the real points at issue, and in making their benefactor become the object of popular odium.

Let, then, these records of human infirmity lie buried with the controversies that gave them birth. Still, in the conduct of his argument itself, there is much that calls for animadversion, and much for caution. The positions on which his reasoning depends are often advanced in too peremptory and unqualified a form; and, with the natural anxiety and zeal of an eager advocate, he is too apt to over-state his own case.

Thus, for instance, having discovered the close connection between an extraordinary providence such as that which Moses promised, and the omission of a future state in his

religion, he pushes the principle to an extreme, contending that the one was an entire substitute for the other; that obedience was invariably rewarded and disobedience punished under the Theocracy; and that, under an ordinary providence, mankind could not entertain the slightest notion of religion, except it were supported by belief in a future state. Now, as it is certain, that during the patriarchal dispensation religion did subsist, he is compelled, by his own principles, without any scriptural authority, to maintain that temporal rewards and punishments were the sanction of their moral law also; and that in the early ages of the world it was so universally, until it was withdrawn on account of the corruption and depravity of mankind.

Now it should be observed that, even under the Theocracy, divine interference was not promised to correct positive crimes. Murder, for instance, adultery, blasphemy, and theft, were all amenable to a judicial process, in the same way as in other communities. It was departure from God and neglect of his religion, it was a violation of those duties which human laws can never adequately enforce, against which divine punishments were threatened. And since the declared purpose of this dispensation was to separate the Jewish people from the rest of mankind, the favour or the displeasure of God was to be displayed more in national prosperity and national calamity than in minute discrimination of the fortunes of private life. To these also, it is true, were the promises and threatenings of God extended; but there is no evidence of that immediate and exact requital which was to supersede all hope of another life, and to bound their views, as it were, of necessity to the present world.

The same disposition to heighten the effect of his argument by the force of contrast is evinced in his interpretation of the text, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come;' the first part of which he arbitrarily confines

to the Jewish Dispensation, and the latter to the Christian; peremptorily declaring, that as the former had no ground for reward in a future life, so the Christian has none in the present.

In like manner, when, in defending his main position that the doctrine of a future state was no part of the Jewish religion, he is led to examine the several passages of the Old Testament which his opponents allege as proofs of this persuasion of the writers, a needless anxiety is manifested to deprive them of that meaning which almost all commentators have supposed them to bear. Into the particulars of these disputed passages it is not possible now to enter. They may hereafter furnish matter for separate discussion. But what I am at present chiefly concerned to establish is, that it was not necessary to his purpose so to explain them. He had himself repeatedly observed that prophets and holy men, at various periods of the Jewish history, were gifted with revelations from God relating to another life, and that these revelations, often dark and ambiguous, increased in clearness as the dawn of our redemption drew nigh.

To this he might have added, that hopes of a future state are *natural* to man, and that vestiges of a patriarchal tradition, conspiring with those hopes, may well serve to account not only for popular belief among the people of Israel, and for the kindred sentiments interspersed throughout their sacred writings, but for the still more remarkable prevalence of such opinions in all the nations of the earth. For that this doctrine was the invention of statesmen or philosophers, however craftily it may have been improved by them, must be reckoned, I believe, among the errors which detract from the value of this great work.*

The same must be said of his endeavour to prove that

* See SHERLOCK, vol. i. *Sermon* vi.

expiatory sacrifice is not to be regarded as a divine, or even a positive institution, but as naturally arising out of human sentiments, and from the exercise of human reason. For, surely the doctrine of piacular atonement, through the sacrifice of an animal victim, is a notion which can never be traced up to the working of nature herself; and the universal prevalence of the practice, not being founded in nature, is one of the most striking evidences both of the common origin of the race, and of that awful truth darkly intimated to our first parents when this significant rite was appointed.

This, however, together with some other questionable opinions, is contained in the unfinished Book which appeared after his death. It formed no part of the accusation so vehemently urged by his living adversaries, and there is good reason to think that, with the light now thrown upon that subject by later Divines, his opinions concerning it would have undergone a change.

At any rate, it must be admitted that the conclusion at which he aims is the corner-stone of our faith,—namely, that by the sacrifice of Christ alone we are restored to a capacity of immortal life; that by faith in his atoning blood we are alone justified; and that faith is not true faith unless it be evidenced by works.

For those who object to this doctrine concerning the Covenant of Works (under which Covenant he maintained eternal life was not promised), it may be well to bear in mind that the opposite opinion was the constant stumbling-block of the Jews of old, and that it is the grand impediment to their conversion at the present day. They thought, as our Saviour told them, that in the Scriptures of the Old Testament they had eternal life. He bids them search the Scriptures, not for the purpose of confirming this old opinion, but because, says He, 'they *testify of Me*; and ye will not come unto Me,' He indignantly adds, 'that ye may have life.'

It is an error of the same kind which still separates the Socinian from the true Church of Christ. He cannot bring himself to look to the sacrifice of the Redeemer as the only door by which admission is gained to the kingdom of heaven. To the correction of this error it is that St. Paul's reasoning is continually addressed, in his epistles both to the Jewish and Gentile converts. 'If the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.' (*Gal.* iii. 18.) 'If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.' (*Gal.* iii. 21.) 'But if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.' (*Gal.* ii. 21.)

And more especially in this to the Hebrews he demonstrates that the promises of God, on which the ancient Fathers relied, all pointed to the same event—an event, the effect of which operates to the saving of the Faithful, as well before as after its occurrence, from the first man Adam, down to the latest of his sons that shall inhabit the earth. Whoever, in short, loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind, and with all his strength, cannot fail of accepting with thankfulness the proferred means of salvation—that is (to use the words of our Saviour to the believing scribe), he cannot be 'far from the kingdom of heaven.'

SERMON III.

I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH.

Job. xix. 25–27.

'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.'

IT has been well observed that there is one inexplicable difficulty in religion, and one only (for all the others resolve themselves into this), namely, the extensive prevalence of evil in the works of a wise, a powerful, and a benevolent Creator. This has been the problem which, from the beginning of time, has exercised the minds of all serious and reflecting men, operating indeed differently, and leaving widely different impressions according to the various dispositions of men, driving some to doubt the very existence of a God, although the contradictions and absurdities of this opinion are tenfold greater than any involved in that which they vainly strive to account for; in others, giving rise to the dismal theory of two independent deities of equal power, exerting respectively a good and an evil influence in the world; while, in some minds, the melancholy apprehension has prevailed that God views with indifference the conduct of men; that the human race, like the several species of the brute creation, is formed merely to occupy the surface of the earth, to live according to their several instincts and ap-

petites, without any higher or ulterior destiny than that of the beasts that perish.

Now, without perplexing ourselves with the arguments adduced on behalf of these several speculations, there is one important inference to be deduced from them all, which coincides with the doctrine of revealed religion, and is in perfect harmony with the scheme of christian redemption. They all attest the fundamental truth, that this state of things is not that for which the soul of man appears to have been formed. They all originate in the acknowledged fact, that we have a perception of right and wrong—a sense of duty and a sense of justice—and yet that, in the course of human life, things continually happen which shock this natural judgment of ours, and which fill us with grief and vexation and perplexity; that good men suffer, and wicked men prosper, often without any possibility of correction or requital during the remainder of their lives.

Distressing as this view of things often is, and hurtful sometimes to the religious impressions of men, yet so essential and inalienable a part of human nature are these impressions, that after an interval of doubt and gloom they always return upon us with their original force notwithstanding the difficulty remains unexplained; and, however unsatisfactory may be our attempt to remove this difficulty, the mind readily acquiesces in the conclusion, that there must be some ultimate purpose in these apparent irregularities, which time will bring to light, and that it is the part of true wisdom to wait with patience for that discovery which our faculties are confessedly unable by any effort to make of themselves.

In the meantime, it may tend to reconcile us to this state of imperfect knowledge, and to raise feelings of joy and gratitude in ourselves, if we reflect upon the uncertainty in which the best and the most favoured men of early ages were doomed to live in this respect; and if we draw a com-

parison between the scanty measure of revelation vouchsafed to them, and that full information concerning a future state, and the proper use to be made of the inequalities of the present life, which is imparted to us in the Gospel.

On this account I have proposed for our present consideration one of the most striking passages of the Old Testament, not only as affirming a belief that God will ultimately reward every man according to his works, but as grounding this belief upon the intercession of a being hereafter to appear as the deliverer of mankind from the power and malice of the devil.

The Book of Job is indeed one of the most interesting records in the sacred volume, not merely on account of its pathetic and sublime character, but as an important link in the progressive scheme of revealed religion. How it came to be introduced into the Jewish canon will ever remain unknown, but that it was part of the Hebrew Bible many centuries before the preaching of the Gospel there is no doubt; while it is equally certain that the writer makes no allusion to the law of Moses, and may therefore, considering the nature of his subject, be fairly presumed to have been unacquainted with it, for it is hardly possible to imagine that a devout worshipper of the one true God, as the author of this book undoubtedly was, should, in the many solemn reflections, and the copious digressions he makes on the wonderful dealings of God with the sons of men, have been wholly silent respecting this miraculous dispensation, had it then taken place; or that to such a man, to so gifted and so privileged a man, the dispensation itself should have been unknown.

By many learned men it has been supposed to be a sacred book, approved and introduced by Moses into his own volume, and preserved from perishing there, like the prophecy of Balaam, found among the spoil of the Midianites. At any rate, the only reasonable inference is that it is more

ancient than Moses, and more ancient than the gross idolatries and corruptions of Egypt. The writer does indeed in one passage allude to the worship of the sun and of the heavenly bodies, as an offence from which he was free, stating at the same time that if he had been guilty of it, the law of his country would have justly punished him.

'If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.' (*Job* xxxi. 26–28.)

It should seem from hence, that the grosser superstitions which afterwards debased the gentile world had not yet prevailed, and that even the worship of the heavenly bodies, although the commencement and the original source of all these corruptions, was so far in its infancy as to be forbidden by the government of the land in which Job lived.

Upon the whole, then, this book may be regarded as a sacred relic of the patriarchal church—that church which was older than Moses, for it is as old as the race of man—that church which was preserved from utter corruption by the institution of the law of Moses, and which, through the medium of that law, was finally perfected in the Gospel.

It is hardly necessary for me to remind you that the book describes the case of a righteous man suffering the extremity of affliction, by the loss of property, of children, and of his own bodily health, through the temporary persecution of the evil spirit, permitted for a season by Almighty God, as a trial of his faith; that the friends of his prosperity regard these sufferings as visitations of divine wrath for his sins; and that in the anguish of his heart, increased by this aggravation of his calamity from the mouth of those who should have brought him comfort, he indignantly rejects their interpretation, breaking out at times into the most bitter complaints of the hardship and cruelty of his case. Although

he humbles himself in the sight of God, before whom not the angels themselves are pure, he denies that his sin is greater than that of those who thus upbraid him, and of many others who are exempt from such plagues; and in the language of the text, he confidently declares his belief that, as God is just, a time will come when his sufferings will cease, and his wrongs will be redressed in his own person. It will be useful here to bestow a little attention upon the argument of his friends, because mankind are ever prone, especially those who have the word providence continually in their mouths, and who are (as Job's friends were) religious men, deeply impressed with a sense of God's attributes and overruling power, to make the same rash construction of any extraordinary calamities by which an individual is overwhelmed. And if, to all outward appearance, this individual had been a man of piety and integrity, held in good repute by all around him, they are too apt to suspect, and sometimes boldly to assert, that he must have been guilty of some secret sin for which this heavy punishment is inflicted.

Such wrong judgment is, however, much more inexcusable in the Christian, than it was in these early patriarchs. They had been accustomed to hear of promises and threatenings of a temporal kind as being the ordinary indications of God's favour or displeasure. They had not been instructed, as we have been, by the mouth of our Saviour, that the victims of the devil's or of man's malice, whether their blood be shed by a tyrant's edict, or by the accident of a falling tower, are not therefore to be accounted more sinful than the rest of mankind; nor had they been taught, as we have, by the pen of an Apostle, that many of the chosen servants of the Lord, if in this life only they had hope, would be 'of all men most miserable.'

But let us admit that in that early age there was some excuse for the uncharitable mistake, yet the argument of the work proves it to be the design of the writer to refute this

notion, not only by the introductory part, which plainly declares that Job is righteous, and that the infliction of distress is permitted merely for a time as a trial of his faith, but by his restoration, in the close of the book, to temporal prosperity.

This, it should be observed, was the only evidence which the nature of the case admitted to convince those around him of their error. To us, who have had the clear light of gospel truth thrown upon this point, the same proof would not be wanting; but as the object of the writer unquestionably was, to correct the popular error that the good and evil of this life are proportional exactly to the deserts of men, and to teach them to trust in God, notwithstanding the inequalities which they see and are unable to account for, we may look upon this latter part as representing merely the sacred moral he has been inculcating in a form adapted to popular use, and as necessary to the completion of his main purpose.

Various have been the opinions concerning the form and character of the composition. By some it has been regarded as the narrative of a real transaction; by some as a mere instructive fiction; by others, and these the most judicious, as a poetical composition founded upon real characters and upon matters of fact. The dramatic form of the whole work favours the last supposition, and the opening scene, in which Satan is represented as arguing with the Almighty, and receiving a formal but limited commission from Him, can hardly admit of any other explanation. Its object is spiritual instruction, and the machinery employed must be spiritually understood.

Such being the scope and structure of the work, its object would have been altogether defeated if, after a faithful endurance of the appointed trial, no reward had been bestowed; if the righteous man, thus made a spectacle of to men and angels, tormented by the evil spirit, and deprived of every

earthly blessing, had been permitted to sink into the grave without any manifestation of divine favour. This catastrophe Job himself was prepared to submit to, and his reward in another life would have been doubtless proportionate to his fidelity. But where would, then, have been the efficacy of his example? Where the encouragement in that age to others to put their faith in God? In that age, I repeat, when the promises of the Gospel were as yet but partially revealed; and when their full and final development could not be made without anticipating that gracious dispensation, the coming of our Lord in the flesh, which was still a mystery that even angels in vain desired to look into.

Doubtless, to the patriarch himself, the firm persuasion of some future scheme of mercy would have been an adequate support; but to those for whose sake the volume was written the result must have been inexplicable, or, rather, it would have added one signal instance more to the intricacies of divine providence, and, instead of fortifying their faith, would have plunged them still deeper into perplexity and error.

It is by no means necessary, howev as some commentators have done, to interpret the words of my text as if it related to future prosperity in this world, or as if *this* change of fortune was the kind of deliverance which Job expected from his Redeemer. This sense is not only at variance with the natural and obvious meaning of the words, but at variance also with the sentiment uttered by the sufferer in his agony immediately before.

'Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever!' (*Job* xix. 23, 24.) By this exclamation he plainly intimates that he expects no sudden restitution to happiness, that his prospects in this life had closed; but he is anxious that some record should remain after his own dissolution of his asserted innocence,

and of the firm faith in which he died. Whatever becomes of my body, he says, I am sure that God will not finally forsake me. But this ardent desire to leave a lasting monument of his faith is not to be reconciled with the notion that his hopes were directed to a temporal deliverance. Had such been his meaning, the iron and the lead would have been needless instruments, he himself would have been the living monitor; and not his pen, but the pen of others, would have handed down the lesson to remote posterity.

Regarding, then, the passage before us as a splendid testimony to that eternal truth which, ever since the Fall of man, has been at sundry times and in divers manners, and with a greater or less degree of clearness, imparted to the chosen servants of God, I will employ the remainder of this discourse in endeavouring to impress upon your minds a point which seems generally to have been overlooked in all discussions of this nature, but which appears to me capable of removing the greater part of the difficulty involved in them, and which is at the same time full of hope and consolation to the pious Christian.

Most of the reasoners on this question treat it as one which admits but of two answers, either that man has no hope and no concern beyond the present life, or that there will be a *spiritual* and *immortal state* after death, in which men will receive a just recompense for all that is done in the body, whether good or evil; and the inquiry is generally proposed under this form—Whether the old fathers and the wisest of the heathen world believed in the immortality of the soul or not? as if the whole of the question lay within that compass.

But the real fact is, as we learn from the books of Moses, that the revelation of a future spiritual state, such as is brought to light by the Gospel, was never distinctly present to their minds. They had a constant tradition, indeed, and the belief naturally grew up in their minds, that God had

some further purpose for their benefit; that there was a scheme of mercy sooner or later to be revealed; that it was their duty to wait with patience for this day of deliverance, and to trust that God would never ultimately fail them, however dark and threatening the prospect might be in the present world, not even though they should breathe out their last, and sink into the grave before his promise should be fulfilled. This principle of faith was kept alive in the family of Abraham, sometimes faint and wavering, at others strong and unconquerable; and in order to its better preservation that symbolical revelation was made to Abraham of the future sacrifice of Christ, to which our Saviour refers when He says, that Abraham saw his day and was glad. But in the rest of mankind it became at length either corrupted with idle fables and fancies, or wholly lost in the reprobate moral condition into which the world had fallen. There are, however, manifest traces, even among the heathen nations, of a belief in some mighty deliverer, who should one day arise and vindicate the providence of Almighty God, and release mankind from the dominion of evil.

Still, under the purest form of belief, the *nature* and the *manner* of this deliverance was imperfectly conceived. The wisest and the most pious presumed not to inquire curiously into the hidden counsels of God. They acquiesced in a fixed general persuasion, but a confused idea, of restoration to a state of happiness after death; but whether this was to be a terrestrial paradise or a glorious earthly kingdom; whether all men would partake of it, or only those who served the true God, or those of a chosen race, it was not for them to say. Many vain conceits and unauthorised opinions were in the course of time mixed up with the belief; and among the Jews, in the latter ages of their history, it was commonly united with the hope of temporal deliverance, and of a commencement of some new era of earthly glory at Jerusalem.

It is needless to particularise here the various fancies current among them about the resurrection, all originating in that universal, though vague and obscure notion, of a future and improved order of things, in which the righteous and the wicked should have their respective recompense, but all corrupted, more or less, with the opinions and inventions of men. Thus some believed that there would be a partial resurrection of the just only, and to this opinion, as an erroneous one, St. Paul alludes, when, in his pleading before Felix (*Acts* xxiv. 13), he says of the *generality* of his countrymen that they allowed there would be a resurrection both of the just and of the *unjust*. Others imagined that there would be a partial and a *previous* resurrection, a reign of saints at Jerusalem, for a thousand years before the general restoration of all things. But I will not detain you with any more of these varieties. Suffice it to say, that the disciples of our Lord were to the very last possessed with the same confused expectations. 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' was a question put to Him after his resurrection; and it plainly shows how deeply rooted in their hearts was this popular persuasion, and how ignorant they yet were of that pure, and spiritual, and eternal kingdom, which Christ has prepared for them that unfeignedly love Him.

The question, then, frequently asked, whether the ancients, Jewish or heathen, believed in a future state, ought always to be answered with this explanation: their belief was vague, confused, vacillating, uncertain, mixed with many false imaginations, and many superstitions. Still there was a foundation in truth. There was a parent germ from whence had shot forth a multitude of wild and preposterous opinions; and even those who were freest from error confessed that they knew not what the will of God was in this respect, although they had the firmest confidence in his goodness and his justice; and this confidence it was which sustained them

under all the trials of life, and in the hour of death itself.

Many pious men have indeed wondered that this doctrine of a future state of retribution is not more clearly set forth in the law of Moses, not considering that a clear declaration of future recompense, according to the conduct of men in this life, would have been inconsistent with the whole economy of man's redemption. How is this glorious reward to be obtained? By man's works? Is any man pure in the sight of God? Was not the whole race lying under the sentence of God's displeasure? Was not his heart continually prone to evil, and to carnal things? Was he able of himself to rise from this degraded state? to pay the forfeiture of his transgressions? or to recover the lost favour of God? No; hardly could he live so as to avert the divine displeasure here upon earth, much less to deserve the reward of eternal happiness in heaven. It was through a *mediator* that he was taught to expect this blessed consummation; a mediator who should offer himself a ransom for the sins of men, who should pay the debt they had incurred, and by his own righteousness and his own sufferings bring them back to the kingdom of his Father.

Until the fulness of time, therefore, was come for the appearance of this mighty Saviour, any absolute promise of eternal life, even for the best of men, would have been premature. It would have contradicted the very fundamental article of our faith, for it is through the blood of Christ only that we have admission to that heavenly sanctuary; and until that blood was shed, and the mystery which had been kept secret from the beginning of the world had been made known, no man had authority to say, however he might *hope* and *believe*, that his sins would be forgiven, and his good deeds be had in remembrance in the sight of God.

To us, my beloved brethren,—thanks be to God and our Lord Jesus Christ,—to us, these animating objects are no

longer matters of speculation and of distant hope, but of undoubted promise and firm assurance. It is not merely the dim prospect of a better country which supports *us*, as it did the patriarchs of old, in our earthly pilgrimage, but the clear and unclouded view of that heavenly inheritance to which Christ is the way, and the *only* way. He came down from heaven, that He might exalt us to it; He took our nature upon Him, that He might restore its original purity; He suffered, and died, and rose again, that He might reinstate us in that perfection of happiness, the love of our heavenly Father, from which we had by transgression fallen, and which no efforts or merits of ours could again have placed within our reach.

To Him, then, who has called us out of darkness to the marvellous light of his Gospel, be all praise, honour, and glory, and thanksgiving in the churches of the saints, world without end.

SERMON IV.

DISAPPOINTED EXPECTATIONS OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES.

LUKE XXIV. 21.

'But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.'

THE particulars of this remarkable interview between our Saviour after his resurrection and two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus are preserved by one of the Evangelists only. St. Luke, to whom we are indebted for the greatest number of incidents unnoticed by the rest, relates the whole transaction with an air of so much truth and simplicity, that he has, not without reason, been regarded as having been himself the companion of Cleopas on that occasion. The suppression of the name accords well with the practice of the sacred historians in similar cases; and this modesty, which is common to them all, is observed by Michaelis (without any reference to the case before us) to be peculiarly characteristic of St. Luke. But whatever weight may be thought due to this circumstance, an attentive perusal of the whole narrative certainly tends to strengthen the supposition that it was told by an eye-witness—by one who is describing what he himself saw, and heard, and felt. The gestures of our Lord when He arrived at the village, 'and made as though he would have gone further,' their own friendly entreaties, and even constraint, expressed in the word παρεβιάσαντο, are circumstances which a reporter at second hand would hardly have preserved.

While the frank comparison of their feelings, 'Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way,' natural and obvious as it was at the first recovery from their surprise, and therefore likely to form part of their narrative, whenever they had to convey it by word or writing themselves, yet is not that which a compiler would have incorporated into a brief history collected from the mouth of others. Of the same kind is the phrase 'their eyes were holden,' ἐκρατοῦντο, a most apt and expressive term certainly, but one which seems also to indicate a lively consciousness of what the narrator felt; since the fact itself, 'that they did not know him,' would alone have been sufficient for the story; as we find St. John, when describing a case exactly similar, viz. the appearance of our Lord to Mary Magdalene, simply says, 'She turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and *knew not that it was Jesus.*' (*John* xx. 14.) Now since we have it on the express testimony of two ancient Fathers, both of Origen and Epiphanius, that St. Luke was a disciple of our Lord, and that he was one of those seventy whom He sent two and two before his face (as labourers in his vineyard) (*Luke* x. 1); and since he has been made the instrument of communicating to the Church one of the original writings upon which our faith must rest for ever, there is a strong concurrent probability that he was distinguished by this particular manifestation of our Lord's person; and thus that, when we read the account of this awful transaction, it is in the words of one who was himself a party, and who describes honestly and forcibly the feelings which then possessed him.

Let it not be coldly objected that these inquiries are vain and superfluous. There cannot be a fitter subject even of literary study to a Christian, than the sacred history, in its most minute particulars. Whatever is connected with it, whatever can tend to make us better acquainted with the times, the persons, the places, which are the groundwork of

that wonderful dispensation, must impart a livelier conception, as well as a more distinct and habitual remembrance, of the divine economy. Surrounded as we are by objects of sense, for ever soliciting our attention, it is well if we can multiply the means of fastening on our notice those heavenly truths, of throwing ourselves back into the scenes which were then acted, and of making them, as it were, present ones to our minds.

Such, we may rest assured, will be the effect produced upon every well-disposed mind by an accurate investigation of the Holy Scriptures; and if there be any intellectual pleasure we may safely call pure and innocent, it surely must be that satisfaction which arises from a discovery of anything conducive to piety, and faith in God. In the passage more immediately under consideration, almost every one will admit that the characters of truth and sincerity are strongly marked; and we have the acknowledgment of one whose taste was eminently good, but who would not profess his belief in Christianity, that he never could read the story without being wonderfully affected, and he thought that if the stamp of divinity was anywhere to be found in Scripture, it was visibly impressed on that passage.

But there is one point in particular which seems worthy of being selected as a fit subject of attention on this day, because it leads to an argument for the reality of our Lord's resurrection, more conclusive perhaps against the adversary than any other, inasmuch as it rests upon facts that are undisputed on both sides. It is that declaration which the disciples make after informing the supposed stranger 'that Jesus had been condemned to death by the chief priests and rulers, and had been crucified.' Immediately they subjoin, 'But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel,' thus plainly declaring that, according to their notions of Scripture, this hope had not been realised, that their confidence had been shaken with his

death, and that they had still to seek for that deliverer of their nation from Gentile bondage whom the prophets had foretold.

It is indeed one of the most remarkable features in the Gospel history, that the disciples should have persisted so long and so uniformly in this mistaken notion of the nature of our Lord's mission. That they expected a temporal kingdom, in which they were themselves destined to act a conspicuous part, and to enjoy all those advantages which mankind are wont to ascribe to worldly greatness, is too notorious to admit of dispute. This confident expectation was common to them all; but we may well imagine that it partook somewhat of the peculiar cast and temperament of each man's mind. In most of them it was probably united with a feeling more virtuous than mere personal ambition. Their *country*, it should be remembered, was then in bondage, its political existence destroyed, its wealth drained by oppressive extortion to fill the Roman treasury, and pay the foreign troops employed to keep them in subjection. It was a cause therefore sufficient to arouse all their best and noblest feelings, even if it promised nothing more than the deliverance of their nation from this grievous yoke, and as such, by the common consent of mankind, it would have been entitled to the most exalted praise. But with the Jewish patriot there was yet a stronger motive. It was not his country only that he hoped to vindicate, but the honour of his God. His law was his religion also, and while the one remained in bondage, the other was in his estimation insulted and profaned. In the fond prospect, therefore, of asserting the kingdom of the Messiah, all the most sublime objects were included which could be presented to his imagination. He was taught from his infancy that the time must come when this mighty deliverer would appear; that it had been promised by the sure word of prophecy, which could not fail; and though much of their prophecies might relate to a new order of things more

happy and more glorious than had hitherto been seen on earth, yet on earth it was fully expected that they would at last be realised, and that the change, whatever it should be, would begin at Jerusalem.

If with these purer motives some alloy was mixed of human passion and infirmity, we cannot be much surprised. Many were the occasions on which our Lord's authority could scarce restrain the natural selfishness of his disciples, as they aimed at superseding one another, and seemed to court their Master's favour with a view to this species of promotion. Even at the Last Supper there was a strife among them 'who should be the greatest;' and when we recollect the solemn nature of that occasion, and the frequent admonitions they had received on this very point from our Lord, we cannot desire a stronger proof that this prejudice respecting the nature of his kingdom was deeply fixed in their minds, and that the hope of attaining some distinguished rank in it was their ruling passion. In pursuance of the same argument, it may be allowed to mention a plausible hypothesis at least of one of our most pious and learned harmonists respecting the motives which actuated the traitor Judas. After a minute investigation of the case, this commentator inclines to the opinion, that the object of Judas was not to procure the death of his Master, but that, being a man of base and sordid passions, eager for those rewards which he, like the rest, expected to derive from Christ's kingdom, and impatient of the long delay, he determined to bring the matter to some crisis; thinking perhaps that Christ would be driven to assert his dominion when the power of the chief priests was brought to act against Him, and when He would either be compelled to resist, or at once to abandon his pretensions. When, therefore, contrary to his expectation, he found that Christ was overpowered, and led away to be crucified, smit with anguish and remorse at the horrid

crime which he had committed to no purpose, he sought relief in death from the terrors of a guilty conscience.

However this may be, it is certain that the whole Body of the disciples clung to the error with an obstinacy almost unaccountable. Our Saviour had often been so direct and explicit, that one is apt to fancy they could never have been mistaken. He had told them that He was going up to Jerusalem, where all things that were spoken of Him in the prophets should be accomplished; that He should be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles; that He should be mocked, spitefully entreated, and crucified; and that on the third day He should rise again.

We are indeed expressly informed that these sayings were hidden from their minds, and that they understood not what they meant; and it is certain that a considerable time, pregnant with remarkable events and much earnest instruction of various kinds, intervened before they were accomplished. Still it can hardly be imagined that the disciples would have remained blind to the true nature of what was then doing, had not their thoughts been fully preoccupied with an opposite persuasion.

That such is the weakness of the human mind, if it have, either from the impressions of early infancy, or from whatever cause, imbibed a strong prejudice, is well known. Minds so preoccupied will sometimes rather distrust the evidence of the senses than relinquish a long-formed and dearly-cherished theory, even on the most indifferent matter. It then becomes, as it were, part of their own nature, and is made the standard by which other notions are measured, instead of being subjected to trial and examination itself.

It may, however, serve still more to lessen our wonder at the strange inattention of the disciples to those frequent predictions our Lord had made of his suffering, and of his

rising again on the third day, if we consider attentively the last discourse He had with them after the celebration of the Passover. St. John is the only evangelist who has recorded this conversation at any length. It occupies three whole chapters (xiv. xv. xvi.) of his Gospel, and seems to have taken place after their departure from the supper to the Mount of Olives. Everything that is told of what passed on this memorable night is solemn, awful, affecting; and to the disciples it must have been, at that time, for the most part unexpected and mysterious. A great change they knew was preparing. Their Lord himself was disturbed in spirit, and almost overcome by his mental agonies. As the hour approached, his manner became more fervent, his exhortations to union and love more earnest and reiterated, his promise of future support and of another coming more distinct and intelligible. As they pressed Him for explanation, He answered in a way that satisfied them more fully than He had ever done before: 'I came forth,' said He, 'from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.' (*John* xvi. 28, 29.) Again, when He explains to them the reasons of his going, and the benefits which they will themselves derive from it, He repeatedly tells them that He will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, unto them to supply his place; that it is necessary He himself should go, in order that this Comforter might come. All these declarations are intermixed with the most affectionate and ardent prayers for their welfare, and with strong injunctions to maintain peace, concord, and union, among themselves. It cannot be wondered at, therefore, if they had left upon their minds a powerful impression that this was the *last* interview they should have with Him as their Master on earth. How this departure to the Father was to be effected, or by what divine influence the Holy Spirit was to be shed upon them, was

alike beyond their knowledge; but as the words of our Saviour, *through* the whole tenor of this discourse, do certainly relate chiefly to his ascension, and not to his resurrection or to any intermediate state, it was natural that this view of the subject should get entire possession of their minds, and not improbable that they might fancy that all the former sayings concerning his death and rising again were to be explained in this manner.

It seems further evident that such *was* their view of the matter, by the perplexity they were in when He used a phrase somewhat inconsistent with it. 'A little while and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.' This, it may be observed, is the *only* passage in the whole three chapters which intimates that any *interval* will elapse between his death and his ascension; accordingly, his disciples, already convinced that He was taking his final leave of them, could not reconcile this saying, 'A little while, and ye shall see me,' with that notion. His answer to their inquiry as to his meaning, though full of tenderness and consolation, is such as to leave the point still obscure; and He withdraws their attention from it by reverting to the other topics of his discourse, and by repeating his promise of future communication and support after He shall have ascended to the Father.

That the disciples, then, were not prepared to expect this issue of their Lord's ministry; that they cherished the hope to the last that He would triumph over his worldly enemies; and that, when this hope failed, they were confounded, dispirited, and dismayed, we may assume as facts incapable of being denied.

At the eve of the crucifixion this change of mind became first apparent. It was not till the Shepherd was actually smitten that the sheep of the flock were scattered abroad. Even then they were lost in wonder and expectation of the

end; whilst many stood afar off gazing at the dreadful spectacle, and still perhaps waiting for some visible interposition of divine power.

But when they saw Him die the common death of all men; when they beheld his mangled and lifeless body laid in the tomb, his enemies triumphant, and themselves left destitute of their Guide and Master, the scene seemed now finally closed. He was now no longer, as they had thought, 'He that should have redeemed Israel.'

Let us now turn to consider in what manner they acted during the first moments of their disappointment. Did they regard the sacrifice they had made, when they left all and followed Him, as entirely thrown away? Did they accuse themselves and one another of folly and infatuation? Did they pour out their vexation in fruitless reproaches of their deceased Master? Did they endeavour to return into favour with the Jews by casting all the blame upon Him, and acknowledging that they had been misled, like many before them, by a mischievous impostor?

If nothing of this, so natural and so common among the partisans of an unsuccessful leader, was visible among the disciples of Christ, we are not without means of accounting for their different conduct. The remembrance of his miracles was still fresh in their minds. His piety, his meekness, his benevolence, his heavenly instruction, to which they had often listened with fond admiration, were not yet forgotten.

This power and these virtues could not belong to any ordinary man, much less were they compatible with the character of an impostor. Although they found not in Him, therefore, that Messiah whom they had been taught to expect, yet He was, as they, in the honesty and simplicity of their hearts, confessed, a prophet mighty in word and deed. During that last affectionate interview they had had with Him, He had treated them not as servants, but as friends; He had satisfied their doubts more explicitly than ever, and

had given them to understand that, though his earthly ministry had ceased, the dispensation of which He was the author was at some future time to begin. But what the form and nature of his kingdom would be, when it was to begin, and what duties would belong to them in it, they were wholly ignorant. That it was not to be of this world they well knew; and they might easily believe that the fashion of this world would be changed, and a new heaven and a new earth appear, before it was to be ushered in.

From the short account that is left us of the interval between our Lord's crucifixion and his resurrection, we may collect that during this awful pause there did not exist in the minds of the disciples so much as any feeling of expectation or suspense. Those who had followed Him when alive were desirous of paying the customary tribute of respect and affection to Him when dead. They lamented his loss as that of a friend and of a father. They would soon, it is evident, have returned to their ordinary occupations; as we find, indeed, by the account given of our Lord's appearance to the fishermen at the Lake of Gennesaret, actually was the case: and we may be sure, from the long prevalence of Jewish opinions in the minds of the chief among them, that they would have remained steadfast in the religion of their country. They were conscious that a strong prejudice existed against them; and that while this prejudice lasted, it was not safe for them to meet, if these meetings should be known. Even after the appearance of our Lord to those who visited the sepulchre, the few who were convinced were as nothing compared with the many that doubted; and the meeting which was convened for the purpose, apparently, of examining and comparing the several accounts, was held secretly, and, as it were, by stealth. But what a different spectacle does the lapse of a few days present to our contemplation! Those very disciples who thought their only stay and support was fallen from them,

who had dispersed in various directions, and who feared to assemble except in a secret chamber, and under cover of the night, now boldly asserted their faith in the face of the world, and called upon others to follow their example. What, it may well be asked, upon any knowledge we have of human nature, could effect so great a change in the minds of those men? What motive was sufficiently powerful to inspire those with courage who but just before were timid and dejected; to unite in firm bonds of alliance men who, even under the eye of their common Master, were often distracted with strifes and divisions? What could make those venture to preach Christ crucified who were ashamed and afraid to confess their faith in Him while yet alive?

Let us be careful to bear in mind that such is the true state of the question before us. The question is not, what could have induced *any* set of men at that time to preach the new religion? but, what could have induced men situated as the Apostles were, men whose previous conduct and previous opinions, up to the very moment of the crucifixion, had been such as we have just described? If there be any who can satisfy their minds that this sudden change was the effect of fraud, it may be well briefly to lay before them some of the incredible consequences involved in that opinion. They must believe that a few simple and unlearned men, who had followed an extraordinary leader with the hopes of seeing Him establish an earthly kingdom, but who could scarcely be kept together by his authority when alive, yet after his death, when all their hopes were baffled, when their opinion of his character was changed, and their confidence had quite forsaken them, did, nevertheless, within a few days combine to persuade the whole world of a new and unheard-of miracle; that they propagated this falsehood without any variation of circumstance; that after a foul instance of treachery among their own body against their Lord and Master, which they had all witnessed, no one betrayed this

false plot, and that no betrayal was apprehended by them. They must believe that the object of this deceit was to extirpate all deceit and all sin from among men, to inculcate the duties of piety, humility, and charity, with every other quality that deserves the name of virtue; that the authors of this deceit, thus invented and thus spread in direct opposition to the acknowledged doctrine of Christ and to their own, made a voluntary surrender of all their time, their property, and their worldly views, with the certain prospect before them of reproach, toil, public scorn, imprisonment, and death; that they abandoned their friends, their home, and their country, in order to teach it, knowing it to be false, and laid down their lives to attest its truth. But if they believe all this, the expression can hardly be considered as too bold, that they are become unbelievers in Christ through credulity.

Let it be remembered, also (for the argument gathers strength the more rigidly it is confined to its own peculiar limits), that the case of the early converts and martyrs of the Church is essentially different from that of those who were literally the first preachers of the Gospel. The converts placed entire confidence in what they heard and were taught: their faith was the evidence of things not seen; and that faith they did indeed seal with their blood. *They*, however, might possibly have been deceived, notwithstanding all their zeal; as we know that many have been deceived, and have endured every kind of torture, and even death itself, for the sake of false religions.

But on the supposition of falsehood in the Apostles themselves, *they* had not the aid of faith to support them. That powerful spring, which has led men to hardier deeds than any other human motive, in *their* minds could have no place. The religion they preached was neither the *effect* of early habit and prejudice (for that unquestionably lay all the other way), nor was it received at the hand of any revered teacher,

whose sincerity was an earnest of its truth (for they themselves declare that they had it not from man). Upon the supposition, therefore, of *falsehood* in *them*, they suffered for what they did *not* believe, and for what no man ever taught them or encouraged them to believe.

There is, then, we may fairly conclude, no other way, without doing violence to every principle of human reason, and contradicting all we learn from human experience,—there is no other way of solving the question which has been proposed for our examination, except by the simple clue which the Gospel itself affords us. That Jesus, whom they had seen crucified and buried, was risen again. That Master, who had first called them to be his disciples, had now appeared to them after his resurrection. Him they had seen, and handled, and conversed with. He had removed the veil from before their eyes. He had instructed them in the true nature of his kingdom, of which they were till then ignorant, and had appointed them his ministers to preach the Gospel to every creature.

To us it remains, for whose sakes as well as for theirs this mighty work was done, that we be careful not to neglect so great salvation. Blessed, we know, will they be, who have not seen, and yet have believed. But to be entitled to this blessing, the belief of those who have not seen must resemble the belief of those who saw. Let us imagine ourselves to have been of the number of those chosen few to whom He actually appeared. Could we in that case have hesitated to abandon every worldly object which stood in the way of our duty? Could we have thought any suffering too hard, any sacrifice too dear for his service? Such, we know, was the effect on the minds of those who really saw Him; and such must be its effect upon our minds, if we would hold ourselves to be included in the number of those who, according to his word, are called to inherit a blessing, because they have *not* seen and yet have believed.

SERMON V.

No. I.—THE FULLER INSTRUCTION OF APOLLOS.

Acts xviii. 24.

'A certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.'

IN the history of the Acts of the Apostles we are presented with a variety of modes in which the great truths of the Gospel were communicated, according to the condition, the previous opinions, the capacity, or the proficiency of the persons instructed. The earliest is that discourse of St. Peter on the day of Pentecost, addressed to the mixed multitude of Jews who came together to witness the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the assembled disciples. In this first address to the Jewish people, he tells them that God 'had made that Jesus whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ;' that he and his company were witnesses of his resurrection, and that this Jesus being by the right hand of God exalted, and 'having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, had shed forth that which they then saw and heard.' (*Acts* ii. 33.)

The substance of this declaration that 'God had raised Jesus from the dead to be the Judge of all men, and the Saviour of those who were baptized in his name,' is repeated on *every* occasion when the public addresses of St. Peter and the other Apostles are recorded—and this fundamental point being once distinctly established, the fuller instruction

of the Church was to proceed gradually and slowly, as they were able to bear it; a gracious indulgence being shown to the infirmities of human nature, and to the inveterate prejudice, and mistaken opinions, which the most learned and devout of the Jewish nation had conceived.

Even the Apostles themselves, although the spirit of truth was first imparted to *them*, and through them diffused through the Body of the disciples; even they had still, for many years after the ascension of our Lord, much to learn.

The temporary and preparatory character of the Mosaic Law; the true import of all its rites and ordinances, the spiritual nature of the Messiah's Kingdom, and the right interpretation of the prophetic writings,—all this, we may safely conclude from the general tenor of the Acts of the Apostles, was not suddenly, but gradually and progressively revealed to their minds; and as we know from the same history, many years elapsed before that great and final revelation, the admission of the Gentiles into the Covenant of Grace, without passing through the medium of Judaism, was imparted to them.

The conversion and baptism of Cornelius by Peter is generally supposed to have taken place eight years after our Lord's ascension; that supernatural agency was employed to effect this we know, and with what severity St. Peter's conduct was called in question on his return to Jerusalem. It was not until after he had related not only his own vision, and that of Cornelius, but the manifest effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Gentiles whom he had baptized, that his vindication of himself was accepted. Their minds were then, indeed, convinced, and they 'glorified God;' but the strangeness of the information, and the strength of their former persuasion, are strikingly expressed in their reflection, 'Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.' (*Acts* xi. 18.)

It was full four years after this event* that St. Paul received his commission to preach the Gospel as an Apostle;† and although he was sent far from Jerusalem unto the Gentiles,‡ yet his preaching was confined to the Synagogues, until Sergius Paulus sent for him and became the first-fruits of conversion from among the idolatrous Gentiles.

To him also it must be observed that Paul did not preach until he was sent for; nor does it appear that any appeal was made to the idolatrous heathen directly and independently of the Jewish Synagogue, till the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, at Antioch, in Pisidia, when, upon meeting with the hardened opposition of the Jews, they *waxed bold* and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.'§

This happened in the first year of Paul's apostolic mission, and although from this time it is evident that the Gentiles were invited, without requiring from them, as a qualification, any previous connection with the Jews, yet the practice still continued, wherever they went, of preaching Christ *first* in the Synagogues, and thus transforming that assembly, wherever they could, into a christian Church, in pursuance of the great design opened by our Lord himself, of bringing on the law of Moses into the perfection of the Gospel.

Now the case of Apollos, to which my text relates, did not occur till the close of St. Paul's second apostolic journey, during which he had founded churches in many of the cities of Greece as well as of Asia; and it may be referred to the

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* See BARRINGTON'S *Miscell. Sac.* Essay 3. Abstr. p. 19.

† Before this Paul preached Christ in the synagogues at Damascus, not, however, as an Apostle, but just as Apollos.

‡ *Acts* xxii. 21.

§ *Acts* xiii. 46.

twenty-first year after our Lord's ascension. So late as this we find a learned Jew, and one who had been a disciple of John the Baptist, though instructed in many points of the christian religion, and preaching his doctrine in the Synagogues, yet unbaptized in the name of Christ, and receiving from the mouth of Paul's companions that information which was necessary to fit him for a preacher of the Gospel.

Before I enter into a consideration of that knowledge which was probably conveyed to him on this occasion, it may be well to offer to your attention some remarks upon this apparently slow development of the christian dispensation, notwithstanding the mighty agency employed in the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, and the zealous devotion of the first disciples to the cause.

Now the first observation I would make upon this fact is, that it accords perfectly with the whole tenor of God's dealings towards his rational creatures, however baffling it may be to human reason, and however repulsive to that impatience with which *we* are wont to prosecute any favourite scheme of improvement.

Thus, after the slow revolution of the patriarchal ages, in which the worship of the true God was as a light shining in a dark place, what a long training did the people of Israel undergo under that schoolmaster which was to bring them unto Christ.

And when this promised seed came, and after a period of thirty years entered on his ministry, doing such 'works as none other man did,' and speaking as 'never man spake,' yet three years of continued personal intercourse were not sufficient to instruct his followers thoroughly in the true nature of his kingdom. After the communication, then, of that spiritual influence which was to guide them into all [the] truth,* it is but consonant with the general

* Gr. πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

economy of Divine grace, that the progress should still be gradual and interrupted, submitting the heart and affections of man to their due discipline, and enlightening the understanding in proportion to its improvement in righteousness.

In the next place, it is well worthy of remark, that by the long continuance of the infant Church in Jerusalem, maintaining as it did a close connection with the whole system of the Jewish religion, we, as well as they, have had deeply impressed upon our minds the true character of the christian Revelation; that it is the *fulfilment*, rather than the *abrogation*, of the Law; that the 'law is good, and just, and holy;' that the service of the temple was not like one of the heathen vanities to be renounced as a corruption; but to be gradually explained, and understood as swallowed up in the more complete dispensation of the Gospel.

The intimate connection thus preserved for many years, and the sacred reverence which the disciples continued to manifest for the law of Moses, must have tended powerfully to assist the propagation of the Gospel; perhaps it was (humanly speaking) even necessary to its propagation, according to that method which we have already seen was observed, and which it was doubtless the will of God should be observed, in its promulgation, by means, that is, of the Jewish synagogues established everywhere throughout the civilised world. It was to these congregations that the word was always first preached; and it was essential to its favourable reception among *them*, that the preachers should appear to be not apostates and renegades from their faith, but men maintaining a strict intercourse with the established seat of their religion, and 'walking in all its ordinances blameless.'

A very slight reflection upon the fury which was excited by any suspicion of treason in this respect—what a flame it kindled against St. Paul in Jerusalem—is sufficient to convince us how utterly hopeless all preaching must have been to a synagogue in a foreign land, from a man who had either

renounced Judaism, or was supposed to be hostile to the temple-worship at Jerusalem. But while the Church of Christ remained resident in that city, and taught none other things but what Moses and the prophets foretold, even the most zealous adherent of the Law would lend a willing ear to the doctrine.

That the Apostles themselves should be strict observers of the ritual law, during this whole interval, and attach a great importance to the observance, although now instructed in the spiritual nature of their Lord's kingdom, ought not to create any difficulty. Their information in Divine things, although derived immediately from the Spirit, was not complete and simultaneous, but gradual, and adapted to the exigency of the case, and to the advancing state of their own minds.

And if this continuance of ritual observances were an expedient (as it seems clearly to be) highly instrumental to the success of the Gospel, it was surely better that the part which they were to act in it should be natural and not assumed; that they should be sincere, and not dissembling communicants with their national form of religion; and that when the fulness of the time was come, they should then perceive that the true Israelites no longer needed this outward sign of adoption, or this visible service of the temple, which was, in fact, soon to be swept away from the face of the earth.

It was, however, not merely a wise expedient for the furtherance of Christianity, or gracious accommodation to the infirmities of our nature, that this connection of the Christian with the Jewish Church was so long permitted; it served to explain both the course of God's providence in his former dealings with mankind, and the true nature of that revelation which was completed in Jesus Christ.

This revelation, if we would receive it rightly, we must receive as the consummation of the Law; as the Law was an advanced stage of the Patriarchal dispensation, so the Gospel is its completion and its close.

Many a Gentile probably would have been willing to accept it, as an independent revelation, that God had sent his own Son into the world to assure them of a future state, and of the means by which they might attain immortal happiness. He would have listened to and approved the pure moral instruction it contained, and have admired its benevolent spirit as altogether worthy of God, and most conducive to the welfare of his creatures. And this, in fact, is the view which many professed Christians, in all ages, especially in enlightened ages, have taken of it.

But this the Gentile must submit to be told is not the Gospel of Christ. He must be content to receive it as an offspring from Judaism if he receive it at all; and he must wait patiently for that instruction in the way of the Lord, which marks out its inseparable conjunction with the earlier dispensations of Divine grace.

In the work of perfecting the Gospel, it should be remembered that two distinct portions of mankind were to be addressed, each with their peculiar prejudices opposed to it. The exclusive privileges of the Jew, fostered as they had been for so many ages by the especial protection of the Almighty, it was hard for him at once to surrender; and the Gentile reasoner disdained to accept the offer of Divine mercy, through the medium of a despised and insulated people. The one had to unlearn much of his national religion, the other had, if not to profess that religion, yet to become acquainted with it—to recognise the hand of the Almighty in it—and to seek for admission into that Covenant, now matured, of which, in its preparatory form, the Jews had been the appointed witnesses and keepers.

And so intimate, in fact, was this connection, that in the writings of the best-informed Romans of that and the succeeding age, Christianity is always identified with Judaism, and treated as a recent modification only of that hated religion.

To prevail, then, over these conflicting obstacles was surely

no easy task; and we cannot but admire the patience, the perseverance, and address that were displayed by the chief agents in its accomplishment. In the commencement and in the earliest stages of the Jewish dispensation, when the main object of the lawgiver was to separate this people and keep them for a course of ages *distinct* from the nations of the earth, not only was the visible hand of the Almighty repeatedly put forth, and the power of his Spirit manifested among them, but the most effectual human means were also employed, by establishing a peculiar religious system, interwoven with all the customs and practices of daily life.

But now that this temporary dispensation had fulfilled its purpose, and the plan of the Almighty was, on the contrary, to reunite the portions of mankind that had been long kept asunder (although the agency of the Holy Spirit was again displayed in the most striking manner, yet), here also as before a gracious accommodation is vouchsafed to the feelings and constitution of human nature. The habits and opinions long formed and deeply cherished are not violently rooted up —the fond partialities of place, of kindred, of national pride and glory, are not rudely condemned or required to be abruptly sacrificed; but the veil is gradually withdrawn from the eyes, and the true Israelite is conducted by a gentle and indulgent hand to the possession of that better inheritance of which the earthly land of Canaan was an imperfect emblem.

Nay, more than this, if it *be* allowable in the descendants of Abraham after the flesh, to cherish the feeling of national dignity and pre-eminence, it is *in this view of the case* that their honour is most consulted. For although their rulers rejected the Messiah—although they were in consequence soon trodden down and destroyed, and their 'house made desolate,' yet in reality 'God did not cast off his people.' A remnant of the chosen seed was still preserved—a branch of that stock was visibly strengthened by the hand of God him-

self, and into that branch every scion of the wild-olive tree must first be engrafted, before it can bear fruit unto everlasting life.

It was a homage, then, done to this despised race, and so it was felt by the proud Gentile, to receive the promise of life through their ministry, to recognise them as the first-born of God—as the appointed instruments for conveying salvation to all the ends of the earth; and this high distinction was surely made more unequivocal and apparent by the protracted continuance of that form of religious worship, and of national peculiarity, which was for several years united with the establishment of the Gospel.

It was under the impulse of this feeling, strong upon his mind, that St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, poured forth that animated and eloquent appeal to his own kinsmen according to the flesh: 'Who are Israelites' (he says); 'to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.' (*Rom.* ix. 4, 5.)

What is there, we may ask, in all the archives of the nations of the earth, that can furnish a record of glory to be compared with this? Yet even this precious inheritance he tells them they were liable to forfeit, if they trusted to their carnal title alone; for God, 'who is able of the very stones to raise up children unto Abraham,' was even then calling in other heirs of the promise, to supply the place of those who fell away 'because of unbelief.'

And here, again, we may remark another example of the mercy and long-suffering of God towards his chosen people, another reason why the dispensation we have been considering appears to have been adopted, and why, even after the promise had been fulfilled, their national distinction was so long recognised and respected by the Apostles. For St. Paul avails

himself of this motive, among many others, as an effectual means of their conversion. 'Salvation,' he observes, 'is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them' (*i. e.* the Jews) 'to jealousy;' and again, 'I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.' (*Rom.* xi. 13, 14.) He urges this topic as an incentive to their minds, applying most appropriately both the prophecy of Moses, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you' (*Rom.* x. 19); as well as that similar passage of Isaiah, 'I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.' (*Rom.* x. 20.)

In the latter of these prophecies we see exactly portrayed the manner in which the Gospel was first spread among the heathen—'I was found of them that sought me not;' but it is the former passage by which the feeling of national jealousy was likely to be kindled, and which was likely to strike them forcibly as being in the act of receiving its accomplishment at the very time. For in the conversion of Gentiles to the faith then rapidly going on, there was manifestly no account taken of their respective *national* characters; no distinction allowed of Greek, Roman, or Barbarian; no appeal to them in their collective capacity; but each individual as he came in was incorporated singly, and engrafted as it were upon the stock of Israel, without any regard to the particular family of mankind to which he belonged. Dexterously, therefore, and affectionately does the Apostle touch this chord—this fond exultation in their national prerogative, and urge them by the most endearing recollections to seize the opportunity of entering in before it be too late, seeing that their claim is even better than that of others who are fast enrolling themselves in the number of the true Israelites. (See *Rom.* xi. 23, 24.)

There is yet one reason more which may be assigned for

this partial blindness which was permitted so long to mix itself with the christian Revelation; I mean that the consciousness of it in their own case must have inclined the first preachers of the Gospel, after they became more fully enlightened, to make large allowances for the obstinacy and prejudices of those whose conversion they attempted.

Much, we know, there must have been to overcome in the minds both of Jew and Gentile, before the truth of the Gospel could be thoroughly established in them: 'And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.' (2 *Tim.* ii. 24, 25.) Now what better discipline can the heart undergo in order to prepare it for such a work, than to have felt within itself the strong ascendancy of prejudice and error, and to remember the difficulty and delay which attended its own improvement? What more instructive lesson of charity and candour can there be than to reflect upon some remarkable instance of our own obstinacy in opinions now abandoned by us, and the aversion, the vehemence or even the passion with which we once resisted the admission of the truth?

It must surely, then, have contributed mainly to the formation of this christian character in the first preachers, to have experienced in their own persons the gradual dawning of that heavenly light which they were commissioned to diffuse, to have felt how hard it is to surrender opinions and modes of thinking, which are among the earliest of *our thoughts*, and which were once esteemed the most sacred.

And as this preparation seems to have been peculiarly adapted to the service upon which they were all entering, so we know assuredly that the individual among them upon whom the greatest demand was made for patience, for courage, and perseverance in this great work—he who

was most exposed to the storm of Jewish persecution, as well as to that of Heathen pride—was himself in an especial degree to undergo the bitter experience of obstinacy and intolerance, (bitter, I call it, because of the repentance and self-reproach which followed it,) that he was trained in that rough school for his arduous office, and thus fitted to display the signal example he has left us of charitable indulgence and patience towards all those who differed from him.

In conclusion of the present discourse I would observe, that according to the view here taken of God's dispensation with the Jewish people, it is a mistake to suppose that they are to be one day restored to their ancient patrimony, or that they are destined as a nation to act any further part upon the earth. Such, I know, is the interpretation put by some divines upon a few passages in holy writ, and such is the fond expectation not only of this deluded race, but of many pious and zealous Christians who are anxious to bring them into the fold of the true Shepherd. Of those texts of Scripture, however, although it is impossible now to enter into a critical investigation of their meaning and a particular refutation of that sense which has been hastily fastened upon them, yet thus much I would not hesitate to affirm—that there are passages an hundred-fold more numerous which foretell in clear and positive terms the earthly splendour of the Messiah's kingdom, and the perpetual obligation of the Mosaic ordinances; but which are necessarily explained in a less obvious, and in a spiritual manner, conformably to that plan of merciful redemption revealed in the New Testament. And why the one set of texts, few and questionable as they are, which speak of the national restoration, should retain their literal meaning against the whole tenor of interpretation adopted in regard to the other, is nowhere accounted for in any argument that I have seen advanced upon the subject.

On the contrary, the prospect of a national restitution to the land of Canaan appears to be at variance with the first principles of that scheme of Christianity which the Church has handed down from the apostolic times. It is a retrograde motion from heavenly and spiritual to earthly and carnal things, a return to those 'beggarly elements,' and to that contracted economy of things, from which Christ, by the teaching of his Holy Spirit, has long ago set us free.*

There is, it is true, something fascinating to the imagination in this ideal reunion of a scattered people, and a restoration of them to the land of their forefathers, a land which has been the scene of such glorious deeds, and marked by so many manifestations of divine power. Nor will there ever be wanting pious and benevolent men who will lend a willing ear to such anticipations. But the more natural is the charm of these local associations, the more prone we are by nature to indulge in the luxury of high feeling, and to give to our visionary hopes the sanction of religion, the more necessary it is to guard the sober simplicity of gospel truth from this contagion. There is always a leaning in mankind towards what is mystical and marvellous; and upon this infirmity of our nature almost all the corruptions of religion, and all the arts of priestcraft have been engrafted. We read it in the melancholy tale of our crusades; we trace it in the pilgrimages and adorations, in the reverence for holy places and holy relics which the Church of Rome inculcates on her deluded votaries; and we have often seen it exemplified in that eager curiosity which has from time to time been excited about the destiny of the unbelieving Jews.

Doubtless it is our duty to communicate to them freely the precious gift we have ourselves received, to invite them

* See *Scripture Revelation of a Future State*, Lect. vii.

to a participation of the same blessing, to seek by gentle persuasion, and by kind and respectful usage to overcome their prejudices, to win them over to the truth, and to guide their feet into the way of salvation. But in the performance of this task, we must treat with them as individuals, and no longer as a nation. Their national character has long ago ceased, or, rather, it is exalted into that mystical body of which Christ is the head, and all the faithful of the earth, of whatever nation, or kindred, or tongue, they may be, are the individual members. Into this family they also may yet be incorporated. They are, to use the expressive imagery of St. Paul, as natural branches broken off, but they may be inserted anew into the parent stock with even more certainty of growth and nourishment than the shoots which have been gathered from the olive tree that is wild by nature. (*Rom.* xi. 23, 24.) But as long as an idea is cherished in their mind that they still enjoy the rank and privilege of a nation, that some future destiny awaits them under that collective character, a powerful obstacle surely is presented to the work of conversion; the wall of partition is again set up between them and the gentile world; their strongest prejudices are flattered and encouraged, those very prejudices which have at all times proved the main hindrance to their perception of the Gospel. Rather let us remind them of our Lord's caution to his own disciples, not to regard the rumours they may hear of the outward tokens of his coming, when men shall say 'Lo! he is here, or lo! he is there;' for that the kingdom of heaven is within us. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness' (*Rom.* x. 10); and 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' (*Rom.* x. 4.) 'There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him' (*Rom.* x. 12); and when at length the blindness shall be removed from the Jew, and the

fulness of the Gentile shall come in, then truly shall all Israel be saved, not by a return *into* Jerusalem, but by that which came out from it; for then shall be fulfilled the prophecy which ever since the Advent of our Lord has been going on, and is still in the train of its accomplishment, 'There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer,* and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.' (*Rom.* xi. 26.) And this very Deliverer is now by the hands of his faithful servants gathering his sheep into that fold over which He has promised to preside Himself, even unto the end of the world.

To Him the only true God, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory and praise, in all churches of the saints, now and ever. *Amen.*

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* Ὁ ῥυόμενος, answering to the Hebrew גֹּאֵל, *i. e.* Jure propinquitatis rem aut personam vindicare—ut suam asserere—pretio dato redimere et jus ejus persequi.—J. BLOMFIELD'S *Traditions of a Redeemer*, p. 43, et not.

SERMON VI.

No. II.—THE FULLER INSTRUCTION OF APOLLOS.

Acts xviii. 26.

'Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.'

IN a former discourse I dwelt upon the lateness of the Revelation made even to the Apostles themselves, of that full and final purpose of the Almighty, the gathering of the faithful of all the nations of the earth into the fold of Christ, without requiring from them a previous admission into the Mosaic covenant; and, at the same time, I endeavoured to point out the great advantages that were derived from this gradual disclosure of the truth, and the strong evidence it afforded, in accordance with the whole tenor of our Lord's ministry, that the Christian Church is, in fact, the continuation and the perfection of the Jewish Church. The long interval allowed to the operation of this mysterious change, is perfectly analogous to the whole tenor of God's dealings with man in all the earlier revelations of his will; and while it illustrates the sincerity and simplicity of those who report their own slowness of apprehension, it furnishes also an edifying lesson of patience and forbearance to all whose office it was to be in future ages to disseminate among mankind the same divine knowledge.

Let us not wonder, then, that a Jew, like Apollos, who had never it seems conversed immediately with the Apostles,

although taught by the preaching of John the Baptist, more than twenty years before, that Jesus (who afterwards suffered death at Jerusalem) was that Messiah whom the prophets had foretold; although convinced of the spiritual import of the Law, and of the purity of heart and strict morality which God requires of all who seek for admission into his kingdom—let us not wonder, that although thus far instructed in the way of the Lord, he had still much to learn before he could be thoroughly qualified to preach the Gospel. The first and most obvious deficiency was probably the same which pervaded the whole infant Church at Jerusalem for many years—the ignorance that the Gentiles were freely called to this inheritance as well as the descendants of Abraham. This is that 'mystery' so often spoken of by Paul, as hidden until that age, even from the foundation of the world; and, surely, compared with the limited views before entertained, it *was* an expansion of thought naturally leading to those feelings of rapture and exultation which are so frequently expressed by him whenever he adverts to this subject. The first intimation of divine mercy was like the introduction of a ray of light into a region through which we had long wandered in doubt and terror; the second was like the universal clearing up of the sky, and the diffusion of that element as far as the eye can reach, and leading on the mind to the conception of more distant scenes beyond the compass of human vision.

It would require, also, some time, even with a man of teachable and humble mind, well-read as Apollos was in the Hebrew Scriptures, accustomed to a different interpretation of them, before he could reconcile this new and enlarged sense with the repeated promises held out in Scripture, of national deliverance; but still more, it may be presumed, was he ignorant of the full efficacy of that atonement which the sacrifice of Christ had effected—ignorant that salvation was to be obtained only through faith in this sacrifice, and

not by the works of the law. *Justification through faith,* and not by works, is the great point of doctrine which St. Paul labours to establish in all his reasonings with the Jewish converts; and we may add, that this is the stumbling-block which has most offended the pride of human reason in all ages of the Church. A devout, a penitent, and a thankful reception of the gift of eternal life, purchased by a crucified Saviour, who came to reconcile the world to God, and to bring back sinners self-condemned to God, is something so opposed to all the high thoughts and imaginations of man, so baffling to all his natural reasonings and speculations, that it might well require diligent and earnest teaching before it could get due possession of the heart, and dislodge those vain conceits which had hitherto been striving for ascendancy there.

But, on the other hand, it accords so perfectly not only with the wants and aspirations of a truly penitent and pious heart, but with that spiritual interpretation of the Mosaic Law, which was opening more and more upon the candid mind of this disciple, that we can easily imagine this doctrine, like seed sown in good ground, soon receiving its kindly nourishment, and advancing to a mature and abundant harvest.

If, however, we compare the passage of which my text is a part with what immediately follows in the opening of the next chapter, it seems highly probable that the new information afforded to this distinguished convert was not confined to the two heads of doctrine already mentioned.

It is said of Apollos that he had been 'instructed in the way of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.' From which we may infer that an ignorance of the true nature of christian baptism, and, consequently, of that essential doctrine, the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of every member of Christ's Church, is what was here intended. John, we know, baptized only unto repentance, as

preparatory to the admission into Christ's kingdom. And although he openly declared that Christ would 'baptize with the Holy Ghost,' yet the expression as coming from him might well be understood figuratively—the word 'baptize' being as yet by no means appropriated to a sacred use, but being often employed in common life for purification, and often also by way of analogy for initiation into a new state. Certain also it is that some of the most faithful disciples of our Lord, long after his public ministry had begun, were ignorant of that doctrine which He revealed with so much earnestness and solemnity to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' This appeared even to a willing disciple to be a hard saying. Nicodemus had been already instructed in the way of the Lord, and we know that he continued to be after this conference one of his attached followers. Well, therefore, may it be presumed that the same doctrine was still unknown to a Jew living at Alexandria, and who had never joined himself to the assembly of brethren at Jerusalem.

It is not indeed said that to Apollos was administered the rite of christian baptism, although there can be little doubt of the fact, because such was the constant practice of the first preachers of the Gospel. But from this very omission also it seems probable, that the knowledge of the *doctrine*, and not the performance of the rite, was what was chiefly specified as wanting in this case; for had the latter been the meaning of the word translated 'knowing' [ἐπιστάμενος], the history would naturally have gone on to say, not that the way of God was expounded to him more perfectly, but that he duly received the ordinance prescribed by our Saviour. There is a transaction, moreover, which is recorded in immediate connection with this, and which points evidently to the same conclusion; for we read in the next chapter that while Apollos was at Corinth preaching the doctrine he had learnt,

Paul came to Ephesus (which Apollos had lately left), 'and finding certain disciples,* he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.'† Of the Holy Ghost every Jew had heard a thousand times. Their scriptures are full of the doctrine. The Book of Psalms abounds with it in almost every page. But it was a common, and indeed a true tradition among them, that after the death of Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the Holy Ghost departed from Israel, and they had not heard of his having been restored. They had not even heard that the Holy Ghost had *been given,* is the proper translation of the original. And this receives decisive confirmation from a passage in St. John's Gospel, vii. 39, in which it is said, 'This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: *for the Holy Ghost was not yet given.*' The words in the original, which are translated, *was not yet given,* are precisely the same as those which, in the other passage, are rendered, *whether there be* any Holy Ghost. And one cannot but wonder as well as regret, that this great inconsistency should have been admitted into our authorised version.

The communication, then, of the Spirit, by which the heart of every true believer is purified, and rendered fit for the kingdom of heaven, was a principal part of that instruction which was freely given on these occasions.

And the case of Apollos may serve as a useful warning to all those who are inclined to resolve vital religion into mere moral obedience, or, what is an equally dangerous snare to the christian student's way, into a correct understanding merely of the several parts of Scripture. These Scriptures,

* In all probability these twelve disciples had been pupils of Apollos.

† *Acts* xix. 1–4.

so far as they related to the person of Christ as being the expected Messiah, the great Deliverer promised to their forefathers, Apollos fully understood; a doctrine which it requires much learning and industry to support against all the cavils, objections, and prejudices, which even in this age are occasionally raised against it. Nor is such an exercise of our faculties to be regarded as a trifling contribution to the great cause of religious truth. In the instance of Apollos we see that the success of his ministry was greatly promoted by that species of learning. 'For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.'*

In this age, it is true, our argument lies chiefly with another class of adversaries; a class, however, who, like the Jews of old, maintain many of the preparatory and fundamental doctrines of true religion—such as the facts and doctrines of natural theology, a just analysis of human passions, affections, and virtues; correct views of social interests and of relative duties; but who stop short of that vital truth which gives vigour and animation to them all, and which alone invests them with the genuine christian character of christian graces. It is undoubtedly one symptom of a fanatical disposition to undervalue these studies, and resolving the whole of religion into a spiritual abstraction of the soul from all human objects of pursuit. There is, however, an error equally prevalent, of an opposite kind, that of failing to receive into the heart the whole Gospel of Christ, of resting satisfied with merely learning the moral and historical truths connected with it. So difficult is it to acquire that just moderation, that evenness and sobriety of thinking, which is the surest guide to truth in all our inquiries, and which best serves to distinguish the genuine love of truth from that alloy of passion, romance, and prejudice so often

* *Acts* xviii. 28.

combined with it. From this unholy mixture it was that most of the early heresies sprung. Thus, for example, in proportion as the Jewish dispensation was discovered to be of a temporary nature only, and superseded by the Christian, Marcion and his followers, professing an entire devotion to Christ, proceeded to represent the former as the work of a Being different from the true God; a work permitted for a time to prevail, but at length overpowered by a superior and more perfect Deity, the friend and redeemer of the whole human race. And not altogether unlike to this extravagance is the feeling of those enthusiasts who reject with scorn or with suspicion all the auxiliaries of human reason and human learning, as something hostile and incongruous with true religion, instead of enlisting them under the same banner, and studying to collect the scattered elements of truth in whatever quarter they lie, and to trace the harmony which pervades the whole of God's gracious works, whether in the intellectual or material world.

Of the many advantages, then, which flow from the mode of apostolic teaching as collected from the books of the New Testament, this surely is one, that by its elementary and gradual (and what we now call its catechetical) method of instruction, it discountenanced all claims to sudden and complete illuminations, claims frequently advanced in every age, but which derive no sanction whatever from the history of the primitive Church. The extraordinary gifts imparted to many individuals by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, were miraculous testimonials only to the truth of their commission. They were indeed often assumed, and often, as we learn from the epistle to the Corinthians, improperly employed, insomuch as to call for the control and reproof of the Apostle, who evidently undervalues them in comparison with that truly christian wisdom which is the fruit of a right understanding of the Gospel. To us, therefore, they furnish no precedent and no particular lesson,

except as a strong admonition to charity, moderation, and humility. But in all ordinary cases the Apostles proceeded with religious teaching as every judicious teacher does with human instruction. They require from their disciples at first an implicit confidence in their own superior information; without which, slow indeed is the progress in any branch of learning. They carefully impart the rudiments of knowledge before they advance to deeper and more difficult matters, anxiously watching the improvement of their hearers, and furnishing more complete instruction in proportion to the just conception that appears to be entertained of what has been already taught: 'And I, brethren' (says the Apostle Paul, in 1 *Cor.* iii. 1, 2), 'could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.'

It was not a single declaration, however earnest or authoritative, that could be expected to procure the assent of his hearers to any truth; it was not a single explanation of doctrines which appeared to them strange and perplexing, that could, even if candidly received, at once obliterate former opinions, or prevent their revival and admixture with the purer faith now proposed for their acceptance.

We cannot but suppose that what we see daily around us, even under the advantages of universal profession of the Gospel, took place also in that earlier age; that besides the general impediment of Jewish or Gentile prejudices, among the willing hearers of the word, some would embrace one doctrine with eagerness and zeal to the neglect of others; some would start difficulties and refuse to listen to what is not free from difficulty, till their doubts were fully satisfied; fond of disputation—fond of display—vain of their ingenuity—partial and indulgent to their own infirmities—pleased with what coincides with some favourite hypothesis, pursuing the subject to curious or extraordinary lengths, and inclined

to regard some points, however subordinate, as of primary or even sole importance. We cannot be too often reminded that the truth which now lies interwoven without system in so many apostolic writings, and which is ascertained in a thousand instances by careful study and comparison of separate passages of Holy Scripture, was then imparted by oral teaching only, and that whatever advantage may appear to belong to those who could thus refer to a living infallible guide for explanation of what they imperfectly understood, may be compensated to us by permanent written evidence in place of floating and occasional instruction. Much, it is true, which we gather out of various parts, and elicit by a collation of texts,* was to them taught absolutely and directly, but being so taught it was liable to be misapprehended or forgotten, or after a short interval to be confused and intermingled with other matter; while, in case of doubt or dispute, no standard as yet existed of canonical writings, by which the question could be determined and set at rest as often as it furnished matter of debate in their assemblies. Accordingly we find great part of the Epistles occupied in correcting erroneous opinions concerning what had been orally delivered long before, in cautioning believers against heretical teachers —against the specious admixture of tenets borrowed from heathen philosophy, and against the perverse reasonings which conceited men among themselves would sometimes maintain; reasonings which were either inconsistent with the fundamental truths of Christianity, or likely to seduce their minds from its original simplicity. Much also is occupied in inculcating the moral duties of life; in teaching them how all that is truly good and useful in social life —all that is agreeable to our natural sense of right, harmonises with the Gospel of Christ, and derives fresh authority and obligation from it.

* *Acts* xviii. 2; xix. 8, 9, 10; xx. 20–31.

Corresponding with the extent and variety of this instruction is the *time* occupied by them in building up those churches that were founded in the most considerable cities of the Roman Empire. At Antioch, Paul and Barnabas continued a whole year employed in this ministry.* At Corinth, at Ephesus, still longer periods were devoted to the same object.

And as from every evil under the gracious dispensation of Providence some good is seen to spring, so may we confidently infer that the strifes and jealousies—the obstinacy and the dulness—the prejudices, weakness, and errors of the first churches are valuable to us, in having called forth those corrections from apostolic authority, which now form part of the written word, and which serve as a code of law for similar cases, as often as the infirmity of human nature still manifests itself (as doubtless it will ever do, more or less) in similar deviations from the truth, and in the same tendency to corrupt it. How defenceless, in fact, would the cause of the Church now be, compared with what it really is, if no precedents existed to guide us under the unexpected opposition of false teachers; and amidst the divisions caused by men, all professing a belief in the same Redeemer, but obtruding from time to time their several fancies as parts of religious truth, or as additional to what the four Gospels and the Acts contain. Well indeed, it is *for us*, that corruptions arose in the Church before the unerring master-hand was withdrawn that could remedy them.

Neither let it seem strange to any one, that the words of eternal truth, simple as they are, and reducible to a narrow compass, should yet require the continued and patient labour of years to fix them in the mind, and to give them that absolute possession of the heart which is alone de-

* *Acts* xi. 26.

serving of the name of faith. The substance, indeed, of the Christian's belief is often expressed in a brief form of words, comprising all the fundamental articles of our religion, intelligible almost to a child, and easily committed to memory. Of the leading points other short expositions are current, which might be learned in the course of a few hours, while to us, the Scriptures are always open for reference and for fuller information in case of doubt, just as to the earlier Christians the means were always at hand of consulting some living guide. Yet, of those who live in regular communion with the Church, and who have received the ordinary rudiments of religious instruction, how many thousands are there whose knowledge we discover, upon any occasion which arises of closer examination, to be imperfect, or their ideas confused, or inaccurate, or altogether erroneous! How many who leave out of sight some essential point of doctrine, or betray an ignorance of its relative importance, or (misled by the ambiguity of language) attach a false meaning to some principal word or phrase! How many, again, (and those, perhaps, the largest class,) who, from the very circumstance of having early committed a set form of words to memory, repeat them at length without thought, like so many titles of chapters, the contents of which have imperceptibly faded away from the mind, although the loss is seldom suspected while the remembrance of the title is familiarly retained!

It is to a certain degree the same with human sciences, and with all the objects of intellectual pursuit; but as to those truths which explain to us the relation we hold towards our Maker, our Sanctifier, and our Redeemer—which regulate not only our lives and actions, but our inmost thoughts, and affections, and desires—which are designed to awaken the conscience and to penetrate the heart—how can we imagine that they will be secured to us in their practical force and vigour merely by learning a compendious form

of words—or that amidst the world of cares and distracting objects which surround us, they will maintain their hold, unless we bend our attention steadily towards them, and provide by frequent exercise and deep meditation and continual prayer, a counterpoise to that throng of rivals which on all sides press upon us, and which tend to hide them from our eyes?

Neither, again, can *they* expect to be favoured with a right understanding of spiritual matters, who, while they presume upon assistance from above, are backward in their own endeavours, and slight the opportunities afforded them of knowing the way of the Lord as it is discoverable from the faithful record of his word. Without that divine help, indeed, their own efforts will be unavailing; and the humblest disciple who lends a willing ear to this instructor, will acquire a better knowledge of divine things—will discern more readily what is suitable to his wants, and what is agreeable to his Lord's will, than either the educated man who engages in those studies without devotion, or the enthusiast who thinks himself above the need of them.

There are men of acute and ardent minds who engage in such inquiries, with a view to satiate their thirst of knowledge only; blind to the spiritual character of the truth they are in quest of, and destitute of that piety which even more than mental vigour enables a man to discover and to apprehend it; men who are like the fallen Angel described by our great Poet as sitting on the tree of life in Paradise, who yet—

> Not on the virtue thought
> Of that life-giving plant, but only used
> For *prospect*, what, well-used, had been the pledge
> Of immortality.—*Paradise Lost*, iv. 198.

In these discourses upon the case of Apollos, it has been my object to demonstrate the intimate union that subsists between the Jewish and the Christian dispensations, the one

being gradually moulded and elevated into the other; and to suggest what, in all probability, were the heads of instruction, which a learned and devout Jew still required, who believed indeed in the crucified Jesus as the promised Messiah, but who had never heard of the gift of the Holy Ghost in that age, or of the revelations made to the Apostles after our Lord's ascension—revelations of which that Body was made the depository and the authorised dispensers to all mankind. A gradual and progressive instruction seems to be the natural consequence of such a plan for the foundation of the christian Church; and from the character of the apostolic teaching, which as a matter of fact cannot be doubted, I have endeavoured to show both that strong evidence is afforded to the truth of Christianity, and that many advantages are derived to the Church from it, especially in these latter times.

Let it, however, be well understood, that though the work of Revelation has been thus gradual in its progress, it has not come down to us as an *unfinished* work. The volume of Revelation has been long ago closed. There is nothing left for later ages to supply. The Apostles have themselves made known to us 'all the counsel of God' as far as it was ever revealed to man—or as far as our spiritual wants require that it should be made known.

In this 'counsel,' my brethren, may you ever stand fast and immovable, rejecting alike the traditions of the Romanist, and the vain pretensions of modern enthusiasts to inspiration. And may God enable you to keep this faith pure and undefiled—to walk in its light—to rejoice in its holy comfort, and to derive peace from it to your souls both here and hereafter. To Him, the author and finisher of our faith—with the Father and the Holy Spirit—be all praise and glory, and honour and thanksgiving, in all churches of the saints, world without end. Amen.

SERMON VII.

THE UNJUST STEWARD.

LUKE xvi. 8.

'And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.'

THE method of instruction by means of parable has been adopted from the earliest times by all those whose object it was to make an impression upon simple and uncultivated minds.

If they wished both to awaken attention at the time, and to fix any moral lesson firmly in the memory, they contrived to embody it in some agreeable or interesting story, or to connect it with some image—some external object—some familar transaction of common life within the compass of most men's experience.

The advantages of this method are many and important. The chief perhaps is, that it can hardly fail of being universally understood. Abstract terms (as they are called); those which denote some general idea, such as 'faith,' 'grace,' 'zeal,' 'virtue,' 'right,' are very differently received by different minds. They continually require to be defined or explained according to the use and application made of them; and even studious and learned men often mistake the precise meaning, or the precise extent in which they are employed upon each particular occasion.

But when the general truth taught assumes the form of a familiar example,—an incident of real life, level to the capacity and common to the experience of all mankind,—it then carries with it its own definition and application. The scoffer and the caviller may indeed abuse their talents in raising doubts and starting difficulties; but the honest and good heart—that ground for which the seed of the word of God is alone calculated—will seldom fail to perceive the just import of the lesson; and though it may not always be able to resolve perplexing and ingenious questions raised by others, or to adjust the exact limits of the rule in nice cases, yet for all practical purposes it will generally be able to decide quickly and correctly, and with that assistance from above which a pious and humble believer always obtains, can never fall into any material error.

We cannot wonder, then, that our Saviour, who preached the Gospel to the poor in spirit, who required all his disciples to receive the word of God as little children; that is, with simplicity and meekness—with a desire to learn the truth, and with entire confidence in their heavenly instructor,—we cannot wonder that He should frequently adopt this form of teaching. Accordingly we find that figurative comparisons, and parables of various kinds, abound in his discourses. Some of them indeed were designed to wrap up and to disguise for a time the spiritual truth conveyed by them; but this partial and temporary concealment had the effect of making the truth, when once it burst upon the mind, more impressive, and it was finally concealed from those only whose obstinate and unbelieving minds rendered them unfit for its reception.

But the parables which are '*written for* OUR *learning*,' are to all willing minds—to all that 'have ears to hear,' no dark sayings. They are universally acknowledged to be the most intelligible, as well as the most edifying parts of Scripture.

Still, a necessity often arises for guarding against a mistaken use even of these passages, and of supplying an occasional help for their right interpretation. There are persons, for instance, who foolishly and without the slightest authority pretend that every object which is mentioned in Scripture, every animal, plant, and leaf, has its appropriate signification of a spiritual kind, and who have perplexed themselves and others with an attempt to explain these things accordingly; missing, at the same time, the true and simple lesson while in pursuit of their fanciful conceits and refinements. Thus, they interpret all the ordinary occurrences of our Saviour's life, which are merely interwoven with the story of some miracle or some instructive discourse, as so many indications of some corresponding thing in the invisible world, and as containing hidden truths to be discovered by long study and devout meditation. Perhaps it is impossible for us exactly to draw the line between those circumstances which are significant, and those which are of no spiritual importance, in a parable. Neither is it necessary that we should be able to do so. Let us recollect what was before said of the form of a parable. Its object was explained to be, not merely to instruct, (for that is equally the object of precept and admonition,) but to excite attention also, and to lay hold on the memory. From its very nature, then, we may expect that some parts of it will be adapted to these latter purposes only, and be introduced expressly with that view. The main drift and design of each parable is always obvious to the plainest reader. Let that be made our beacon and our guide in the interpretation of the rest. Whatever we find harmonizing with that design, inculcating the same lesson, conducive to the same end, let us not fear to interpret in the same figurative manner as we do the main subject. After this manner our blessed Lord himself explains the parable of the sower; telling his disciples that the seed, the wayside, the rocky

ground, the birds, the thorns, the good ground, have each their proper meaning of a spiritual kind.

Whatever does *not* easily admit of being so explained, let us without hesitation believe to have been introduced for the other legitimate purposes above mentioned, viz. to engage the attention, and to make a lasting impression upon the memory.

Stripped of these adventitious circumstances, the moral instruction would still remain the same, but it would assume the form of a dry precept, instead of that lively and natural character which constitutes the great beauty and use of the parable. And one cannot but lament that men should ever have been led, by an extravagant zeal, to misconstrue this benevolent practice of our heavenly Teacher, and to abuse it into an occasion of mystical folly and delusion.

The parable, of which I am about more particularly to speak, has certainly its difficulties, and in some points, I believe, it is generally misunderstood. But before we enter on the explanation of this parable, I would point out to your notice a remarkable character of all the parables taken collectively; namely, that there is an endless variety in the objects of comparison which are chosen.

Thus, the kingdom of heaven is likened to a wedding feast, to a grain of mustard-seed, to a fishing-net, to leaven, to a pearl of great price, to a vineyard, to a field of corn. This very multitude and variety of images seems expressly designed, among other wise purposes, to keep us from falling into the absurdity of saying that any *one* of them is in itself a proper emblem of the spiritual thing intended.

They are all useful for the purpose of illustration, but there is no natural correspondence or secret connection between the two things; nor is it safe to strain the comparison of circumstances further than is necessary to support the principal idea and purpose, which is the key to the whole passage;

and we ought to drop it whenever they fail to coincide with, or to throw light upon, that purpose.

Thus, too, does our Saviour represent Himself under various forms of comparison, according to the peculiar object of instruction designed at the moment, as a shepherd, as a door, as a vine, nay, in more than one passage, as a thief in the dark.* Let me add, as a striking example of the same kind, the parable intended to encourage us to perseverance in prayer to God; where the person engaged in prayer to God is denoted by the widow making her entreaty to the *unjust judge*. Surely no one ever understood the meaning of this to be that God resembled the judge in his *injustice*, but that if perseverance would prevail over injustice in a human judge, much more will our heavenly Father give us what we ask for if our supplications be earnest and unremitted, and the thing be really good for us.

It is from not rightly understanding the true nature and design of the parable, that many people have taken unnecessary trouble to explain what they think hard and obscure in this of the Unjust Steward. And they have increased the confusion by supposing it to signify, that all men are *stewards* only of their worldly property, exactly in the same way that he was steward to his lord. But that this interpretation is a mistake will, I think, easily be made to appear.

It is very true that we must all give an account hereafter of the manner in which we have employed our worldly goods; not merely our riches, but all the faculties of our minds and bodies. This is a solemn and important truth, but it is not the particular lesson this parable was designed to teach.

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* *Luke* xii. 39; 1 *Thess.* v. 2; *Matt.* xxiv. 43; 2 *Pet.* iii. 10; *Rev.* iii. 3.

That lesson I will now endeavour to unfold.

If you read a portion of the chapter just before it, you will see that our Lord's more immediate object *then* was to guard the disciples against covetousness, or an over-anxiety to provide for the things of this life, the prevailing sin of the Pharisees, who, as we are told in the same chapter, 'were present and heard this parable.'

It is introduced by a long series of parables, all of them intended to caution his hearers against a mere nominal profession of the Gospel, as if it were a thing to be taken in hand lightly, and laid down at pleasure. They ought to weigh well, He tells them in these parables, the full extent of the sacrifice they would be called upon to make. From henceforward they were to become 'Children of light;' their treasure was to be in Heaven; Heaven was to be their home; and they were to look upon the things of this life, not as valuable in themselves, but as means placed in their hands for obtaining everlasting happiness.

With a view to explain more fully and to impress more forcibly the same lesson, He proceeds to put the case of a man who is about to undergo an important change in his fortunes; to lose his present friends, his abode, his occupation, his means of subsistence, to be turned adrift upon the world, to go he knows not whither.

What is the thought that would naturally possess the mind of a prudent man under those circumstances? Would he say, 'I will enjoy my place while I can, whatever may be the consequence—I will eat, drink, and be merry'? Or, would he not rather seek to employ all his means during the short remaining interval that he has a control over them, in making friends among those upon whose bounty he must soon become dependent?

Doubtless, the few hours during which he is to retain his office will appear as nothing to him, when compared with the portion of time that is to follow. He will account it

childish to bestow a thought upon these, and his whole mind will be employed in contriving an adequate provision for that long period which includes the remainder of his life.

Such is the conduct which a worldly-minded man of good sense and judgment would naturally adopt under such circumstances. And further, if he had no scruples of conscience to restrain him, no religious principle, no fear or belief of anything beyond the grave, he would probably take advantage of any means, whether honest or not, to secure this great end, without which his ruin must appear inevitable. All, in fact, would give way to that one purpose of providing a secure retreat, when the sentence of dismissal should be pronounced upon him.

Apply, now, this example, my brethren, to your own case. Do you believe that your stay here is short—that the decree of death has actually gone forth—that a time will shortly come when you must resign your post, however valuable it may be, and be translated to another state where your present advantages will be of no avail?

Doubtless such *is* your belief. Do you, then, like the steward in the parable, make the preparation for that great change the main business of your lives? Do you cast about, as he did, and contrive how you may obtain friends in that other world to which you are fast approaching? Do you employ the riches of this life with a view to that object, disregarding present profit and pleasure, as trifling in comparison with those solid benefits which may be enjoyed in a future life? Although you well know, that whether you may continue here or not is out of your own power, yet, are you taking care to do what *is* in your own power towards improving your condition hereafter?

If the answer to these questions be such as most people of humble and candid minds would give, the conclusion is irresistible—that 'the children of this world are in their genera-

tion wiser than the children of light.' *They* do not, by their practice, contradict their profession. *They* do not halt between two opinions. Baal is their God, and they follow him. But you declare the Lord to be your God, and yet must confess that you do not in like manner devote yourselves to his service.

And yet, if you are sincere in your belief, the preparation for your future state ought to concern you more, infinitely more, than the steward is represented to be concerned for *his*. His care was that, for the few remaining years of his life, he might not be left destitute. Your care, as Christians, is not for the comfort of a few years of life, but for that eternity compared to which the longest life of man is but as a moment.

If therefore you only bestowed an *equal* degree of thought with him, *you* would not deserve the same commendation; but when you are found to bestow *less* upon the interests of eternity, than a prudent man would *for the sake of comfort in his old age*, how awfully impressive does the lesson become, and how humiliating to the heart of a pious Christian. Will he not with sorrow and self-reproach confess his own unworthiness? Will he not, struck with the strange inconsistency of the children of light, thus forced upon his notice, feel the want of that help from above, without which all our resolutions are frail and fruitless, and will he not earnestly implore the Father of light to 'increase his faith'?

Such is the natural and simple application of this instructive parable. To seek for some circumstance in the Christian's case, corresponding with each minute particular in the fictitious example, we have already observed, is to mistake the object of this mode of teaching. Yet in the example before us there is one point, not of similarity, but of difference, which ought not to pass unnoticed. For it cannot be too carefully or too earnestly pressed upon your attention,

that the steward's conduct is not in *all* its circumstances proposed to us as a model of imitation, but as instructive only in its general design and character. He is represented in his anxiety for the future as setting at nought even moral principle, when it stood in the way of his main purpose. His *duty* was violated that he might serve his *interest*. But for us no such violation is ever necessary in order to carry the precept into full effect. Our duty and our interest in this great concern go hand in hand. We have no occasion to defraud our Lord here in order to secure to ourselves a friend hereafter; for the friend who is to receive us into everlasting habitations is the same who has entrusted us with the goods now at our disposal.

He willeth not that any should perish; and it is only by doing his will *here*, that we can ever expect to obtain his favour here or hereafter.

When, therefore, we perform acts of friendship, of kindness, of compassion, of liberality to those around us, we are not like the unjust steward, bribing our Lord's debtors at his expense. We are making that very use of his treasure which He himself approves. He will not love us if we do not love one another.

The lesson therefore becomes doubly strong, and its application more pointed. There is not a shadow of excuse left us if we regard it not. It must be a deliberate and decided preference of the interests of this life, over the interests of eternity, and nothing but that, which can account for the inconsistency.

These are reflections which will probably occur to the most worldly-minded man upon his death-bed. In that hour he will acknowledge that when the world called him wise, he was in reality acting most foolishly; that it was but lost labour that he rose up early and so late took rest, and ate the bread of carefulness, for all that carefulness was

wasted upon a day, while the season of eternity (for which he made little or no provision) was advancing rapidly upon him.

Let the reflections of *his* death-bed be the companion and the guide of *our* active days. If there be truth in them, they are *true in* themselves, true at all times, true, not in the gloom and solitude of the sick chamber only, but in the broad sunshine of life. The business of the world—its glittering objects and fleeting pleasures—may withdraw *our* attention from them, they cannot alter *their* nature. And be it our care, with the blessing of Almighty God, and the aid of his Holy Spirit, that they do not ever hide them from our eyes.

SERMON VIII.

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

2 Cor. ix. 7.

'Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.'

THAT 'to give is more blessed than to receive,' is one of those sayings which fell from the lips of Him who spake not as man speaketh, and yet it is not recorded by any of the four Evangelists. It is preserved to us only in that beautiful and affecting passage of the Acts, xx. 35, which contains the farewell address of St. Paul to the elders or presbyters of the Church of Ephesus. In this address he adverts to it as a well-known saying of our Lord already familiar to their minds, for he bids them *remember the words* of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

That the act of giving, under the christian dispensation, even when the gift has reference to the worship of God, should always be accompanied by a feeling of love and charity towards our neighbour, is evident from the solemn injunction of our Lord to those who made their offerings at the altar under the Law, 'Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' (*Matt.* v. 24.)

When, therefore, in the primitive Church, offerings were made as a most appropriate and accceptable part of that

service in which the sacrifice on the cross was commemorated, we cannot wonder that *both* these objects, *devotion*, I mean, to the Redeemer, and *love* to the brethren whom He has redeemed, should be combined, and that in the exhortation to perform this duty so binding and indispensable upon all Christians, the congregation should be reminded how closely allied and how intimately connected the two things are with one another. 'If a man loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' Accordingly, in the compilation of our Communion Service, care has been taken that each object shall in its turn be made prominent, and its special obligation be impressed upon the assembled communicants.

In process of time, indeed, when our Churches had become well endowed, and permanent means were provided for the maintenance of public worship, and when the laws imposed on every parish the obligation of supporting the fabric of their church, and of providing what was absolutely necessary for divine service, there seemed to be less occasion to press this duty upon the attention of the people, and, accordingly, the practice grew by degrees of omitting those passages in the Offertory which especially relate to the support of religion, and of confining the exhortation to the duty of alms-giving and the relief of the sick and needy; and whenever an extraordinary appeal was thought necessary to be made to the bounty of Christians, either for some institution instrumental to the cause of the Gospel in this country, or to its propagation through the world, or for any particular object of charity, a collection was made after the service, not from communicants only, but from the whole congregation, to whom the object had been recommended and explained.

For my own part, I see no reason for departing from this method which has long prevailed, especially when due notice has been given of the intended collection, so that

none can be forced to give as it were grudgingly and of necessity. Nor, again, does it seem to me expedient that communicants *alone* should be invited to contribute to such purposes as equally concern the whole community, or at least, the whole Church of Christ.

Neither do I think that the circumstances of this age require that weekly collection of alms in the church, which, in the primitive ages, was universal and almost necessary, in order to supply the wants of the poorer brethren. During the reign of heathenism no regular or legal provision existed for the destitute. They were left to the precarious charity of their kindred, or their neighbours, or humane individuals, and they often perished for want. History preserves no annals of these private and obscure sufferings, but, because they are not recorded, let us not suppose that they never happened. On the contrary, we are sure that death from famine and neglect, in cases of sickness and old age, must continually have occurred. For even under the influence of Christianity, and in countries well-organised and governed, especially in seasons of scarcity, such things often happen. But, for more than two centuries, in this country it has become a civil as well as a religious duty to supply those who are in want and incapable of supporting themselves, with food and shelter and all the bare necessaries of life.

This systematic provision, I say, renders the weekly collection in the churches less requisite than heretofore; although it ought by no means to be regarded as superseding the exercise of private charity. Indeed, it is one of the advantages of that system of legal relief now more sparingly administered than formerly, that it enables us to bestow relief on individuals who from various causes are entitled to some distinction, *i. e.* to an indulgence in the distribution of our alms, which, if extended indiscriminately to all as it used to be, must in time exhaust the very funds by which they are supplied. It must tend to discourage industry and frugality, to lead

men to neglect domestic claims, and to rely upon the property of others for supporting themselves and their nearest relatives, and is thus utterly inconsistent with the plan of providence in the structure of human society.

There must then, I say, always be ample scope for alms-giving. Let hospitals, and alms-houses, and workhouses, and asylums, for relief of various kinds of distress, be ever so much multiplied, we cannot, do what we will, banish poverty from the world. We cannot, by any contrivance of ours, provide beforehand for all cases of occasional distress. And it is well that we cannot. It is well that the motive for individual charity is inseparable from social life, that the poor shall never (as Moses told the Israelites) cease out of the land (*Deut.* xv. 11); therefore they were bid to open their hand wide unto their brethren, when they were in need and wanted help.

But admitting all this, the provision made by law being so extensive, compared with what it was two or three centuries ago, we may now safely return to that other object in our ordinary Church oblations, which had become almost forgotten, absorbed as it was into the more pressing claims of poverty; and we may and ought to devote some portion of our substance on these solemn occasions to spiritual purposes. Even where enough is raised by legal imposts for the repairs of our churches, and for the mere decency of public worship, there is surely room—very often there is an urgent demand—for some additional means, to give solemnity, and beauty, and affecting interest to the performance of holy ordinances. We cannot prescribe any exact limits to these things. They must vary with the habits of society—with the superfluity of means at our command—with the taste and inclinations of the people for whom they are designed. There is a degree of ornament and decoration which is almost called for in some churches, and in one condition of society, yet which is unsuitable or undesirable in another.

But although no positive rule can be given for these matters, yet we may approach towards a rule, and certainly we may present to the mind some reasons which ought to guide their judgment in the performance of this sacred duty. For instance, we may bid men look around on the habitations in their neighbourhood, the provision made both within and without for comfort, for elegance, for splendour, greater than was even thought of in the time of their ancestors; we may direct their attention to the improvement which has taken place in this age, as compared with former ages, in all the arts of life, in the buildings, public and private, in all that is designed for innocent pleasure and amusement—and still more in the display of wealth and taste, wherever wealth and taste can contribute to the personal pride or the enjoyment of the possessor. And can we survey all this, and not feel that the house of God is at least entitled to partake in the general improvement? Did not David say, with a feeling of self-reproach, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains'? (2 *Sam.* vii. 2.) And shall not we, whose houses, even in the middle and lower levels of life, almost equal the habitations of princes some centuries ago, shall not we seek to give at least a corresponding degree of improvement and decoration to the place of Christian worship?

It is true that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything' (*Acts* xvii. 24, 25), yet is He pleased with that show of love, and veneration, and honour, which pious men have at all times been eager to express, and which at the same time proves, by some sacrifice of their worldly goods, the sincerity of their acknowledgment, that He is the author and giver of them all.

In all times, and under every form of religion, I say, this feeling has been found to exist; corrupt indeed often in the manner and in the object of it, and in the preposterous

excess to which it has been sometimes carried. But this is the case with the exercise of all our feelings. They are all liable to be led astray, and all require discipline and regulation.

The feeling itself, however, is the testimony of universal nature to the duty, now recommended as being an act of homage from the creature to his Creator. And can that act be less proper, as an expression of love and gratitude, when directed towards our *Redeemer?* Can we read the emphatic injunction of Moses to the Israelites, and not feel its application to ourselves, for whom the fulfilment of that law has been achieved in the person of our Saviour? 'Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord; and ye shall not appear before the Lord empty.' (*Deut.* xvi. 16.) The amount of voluntary offerings was left to the conscience of each individual to determine, but it was expected that they would be in some degree proportionate to their respective means. There was indeed provision made by the law of Moses for the support of religion—a whole tribe was set apart for that purpose, and was endowed with a tenth part of the produce of the land. But besides the bare maintenance of religion in all necessary things, there was a perpetual duty still incumbent—not on the rich only, but on *all* the members of the Church—a duty not measured by law, but by their own love and devotion—a duty which St. Paul describes by the beautiful and appropriate metaphor—'a sweet-smelling savour, acceptable to God.'

And this, you will observe, is the true sense of that passage in the Gospels, often produced and applied, but really in a less appropriate manner, when contributions are solicited for hospitals and other public charities. The 'widow's mite' is commended by our Lord, as an index of the devout frame of mind of the individual, who was ready in the *service of God* to make a tender of all her substance. The gift itself perhaps was not sufficient to pay for one stroke of the hammer

in the work of repairing the temple, yet was it, as an evidence of entire devotion, more acceptable in the sight of God than the offerings of the wealthy. Let not the poor man, then, think that it is a privilege to be exempted from this duty. It is rather a privilege that he is equally invited to take part in this work of love, and that whatever be his tribute money, paid to God and not to Cæsar, it will be accepted by Him who seeth in secret, and who will not fail in his own good time to reward him openly.

But, if there be an excess in the performance of this christian duty—if the zeal of Christians has sometimes outrun their discretion, and thrown a sort of theatrical pomp and pageantry over divine worship, so as to break in upon the simplicity of gospel truth, and to distract the mind by offering too many objects of admiration, and to gratify the senses rather than to soften and improve the heart,—if, I say, this error has been committed in the name of religion (and who that has entered a Popish Church and witnessed Popish ceremonies, can deny that this may be the case), it becomes us to beware how we carry the love of decoration and of imposing ceremony too far, and to be careful first to provide things decent and honest in the sight of all men, before we lavish ornaments and costly embellishments, which are but accompaniments to that purer worship that is required of us, the worship of God in spirit and in truth.

And here I must entreat you, my beloved brethren, to reflect upon the great principles of our Reformed National Church, especially upon those which distinguish its ritual from that of the Church of Rome. We do not seek to exalt the priesthood as a class altogether distinct from the congregation—as alone engaged in sacred mysteries—while the people gaze in silence, and either prostrate themselves at the tinkling of a bell, or perform some ceremony as a kind of charm or amulet against the influence of the Devil. We do not seek, by punctilious change of dress, or by burning

incense, or by useless lights, or by the use of images and the power of music, to throw men into a sort of trance, taking advantage of all the infirmities of human nature, and degrading the worship of the Church of Christ almost to a level with heathen rites and mysteries. All these corruptions we have openly renounced and abandoned: God grant that they may never again be permitted to creep in among us, however crafty and insidious the means by which this return to former errors may be attempted. It is the glory of the Reformed Church of this nation to have shown, according to the Apostle's rule, its 'moderation in all things.' We have retained all that we think edifying and solemn and decorous in public worship. We endeavour, in the case of the Holy Communion, to keep before the minds of the congregation the great mystery of redemption, careful to present to them in full view the place and the table appointed for the perpetual celebration of that Holy Ordinance.

We explain to them the word of God from the pulpit, careful not to exalt human preaching above the service due to our Heavenly Father, and to the Lord who bought us. We teach them to pray with the spirit and to pray with the understanding also, not to listen ignorantly while priests pray in an unknown tongue; but we seek to make them join with us in common prayer, occasionally uttering aloud with one accord praises and portions of the prayers, that they may feel it to be their own concern not less than the office of presbyters and deacons who minister in the church, thus to swell the chorus of divine praise.

And here permit me to expostulate freely with you upon a point of duty in which the congregations, especially of this part of the country, are greatly deficient. They have their allotted portions in the service of the Church, equally with the minister. Why is it not equally performed? Why should there be either a dead silence, or a whisper only, or a low voice from a few scarcely to be heard, when the institu-

tions of the Church call for a fellowship in prayer, a joint performance of this interesting act of open praise and thanksgiving from the whole assembly? It is in fact one of the characteristic features of the Reformation—a Reformation which brought us out of almost heathen darkness into the glorious light of the Gospel. And shall not we, while false brethren among us are seeking to bring us back into the former bondage, steadily and manfully maintain the principles of that great work, and guard well our defences, and make good our profession of faith, and show that we at least are not ashamed of the Church to which we belong, and are resolved to keep it pure and undefiled by any admixture of spurious rites, or any innovations which may endanger its purity or disturb its peace?

Upon this subject, however, I will dwell no longer, greatly as I feel its importance at all times, and more especially in reference to the dangers which now assail our Church. But in pursuance of the general objects I had in view, when chusing the subject of this discourse, I proceed to the consideration of that pleasing branch of church service which calls in the aid of music, and makes that divine art subservient to the ends of devotion.

In this respect, too, the wisdom and the moderation of our Reformed Church are strikingly exemplified. Instead of rejecting this auxiliary, and confining its province to the singing of psalms and hymns by the whole congregation as was the wish of the Puritans, and as is the practice of nearly all the reformed churches of the Continent, we have wisely retained both vocal and instrumental music, cultivated and refined by professional skill, as an useful and edifying part of public worship. Careful indeed were our first Reformers, and careful ought we to be, not to suffer it to encroach beyond its proper province, which it is always prone to do, if not kept under due control; careful not to let it become a mere display of skill, or a gratification of the taste of the hearers, or

an occasion of critical study and emulation; but entirely conformed to the spirit of our religion, conducive solely to devotional feeling; the handmaid and not the rival, much less the mistress of a liturgy. Even in this restricted province there is large opportunity given for the cultivation of the art, and for the adaptation of it to the character and circumstances of the congregation. In a remote village and in a crowded town we should not desire to have precisely the same choir. In general, I should say, that some parts of this accompaniment might be addressed merely to the excitement and the direction of devotional feeling; while other parts, and those, perhaps, the most considerable, ought to be such as would assist only, and encourage, and regulate the singing of the whole congregation. This latter object is at least equal in importance, if not superior, to the former. Neither of them ought wholly to supersede the other; but if we are driven to the alternative of chusing between them, I have no hesitation in saying that congregational singing should have the preference.

Even this, however, may be greatly improved and encouraged by a due exercise of the other. 'I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also,' is a sacred principle. Without this, the music of the church rises not above the music of the theatre. It may refine, and exalt, and purify our affections, but it will not aid the preaching of the Gospel—and sometimes it has been known to interfere with it; but, kept in due subordination to that principle, it may become, and it often has become, a powerful coadjutor in the cause of pure religion.

It is not, then, an irrelevant topic in the discourse which I am now addressing to you on the Offertory at the Communion Service, and on the purposes to which offerings so made may properly be applied. That church music of a high order cannot be procured and regularly maintained without considerable expense, is well known. The funds for

this expense must be voluntary. The rich will doubtless take care not to leave this important object altogether uncertain in its amount, or precarious in its duration. But what is for the benefit and religious comfort of all is surely not a matter of indifference to any; and all, therefore, who can contribute towards it ought to feel it a duty to do something, however small, for so good a purpose.

That it is one of the legitimate purposes of the Offertory, I have endeavoured to persuade you. Would God that what I have said may make an impression on your hearts, and lead you to reflect upon the great use there is in assembling yourselves together on the Lord's day, under the guidance of that Church which He appointed, when He left the world, to be the pillar and ground of the truth in all ages. In that holy assembly you may join in prayer and thanksgiving, and in lifting up your voices to Him in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in your hearts before God. But although this is one good purpose for which you are called upon to meet and to make offerings at the Lord's table, and one which will undoubtedly profit your own souls, yet be careful to remember that it is one purpose only among many for which those offerings should be made, and that you must ever bear in mind the wants, also, of your poorer brethren.

The application of the means which the devout communicants may thus from time to time supply, is wisely left to the discretion of the local authorities of the church in which the offering is made. There are, as I said, many other objects to which they may be applied, all more or less conducive to the honour of God, as well as to the comfort and the edification of the assembled church; but whatever funds may be thus collected, they are, beyond a doubt, principally due to charitable objects. For, let it never be forgotten, that though faith may by these means be increased, and hope nourished thereby, yet the greatest of all christian duties is charity.

SERMON IX.

JUDGE NOT ONE ANOTHER.

ROMANS xiv. 13.

'Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.'

THE general tenor of St. Paul's reasoning and doctrine in this epistle harmonises admirably with the grand principle for which he contends in the opening of it, namely, that all mankind, both Jew and Gentile, had come short of their duty to God, and had no hope of obtaining his favour by any doings or deservings of their own.

He demonstrates the large and liberal character of that dispensation which our blessed Saviour had brought into the world, a dispensation under which all distinctions were cancelled, except those of faith in his redemption and obedience to his commands. And 'his commands are not grievous'—they are not like the Mosaic ordinances, 'touch not, taste not, handle not,' minute and burdensome, and extending to all the external details of social and domestic life; but in lieu of these is propounded a principle more comprehensive, both as it regards God and man, freeing our bodies from endless observances, but subjecting our minds more entirely than before to one universal law of holiness and charity.

This change of character is insisted upon, and illustrated

in a great variety of passages;—in none, perhaps, more pithily and decisively than in a verse which follows soon after my text: 'For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' (*Rom.* xiv. 17.)

Yet in the assertion of this liberty with which Christ had made them free, the disciples are cautioned to keep steadily in mind the great law of charity under which it ought to be exercised.

A great part of the epistle is occupied in reproving *the weak*, (those who still attached a value and importance to the Jewish ceremonies,) for condemning those who were less scrupulous; and this they often did in such terms as were disparaging to the great Author of our redemption, and implied a want of faith in the one all-sufficient atonement made by Him on the cross. This error, indeed, was so wide-spread, and so inveterate, that we cannot wonder at the frequent and earnest refutation of it, not only here, but more especially in the epistle to the Galatians, and generally to all churches founded on the basis of a Jewish synagogue.

But in the passage before us, the opposite party also are admonished against too free and offensive a use of their *privilege*, and against a disposition unnecessarily to wound the prejudices of their weaker brethren. To *all* Christians, then, he may be understood to address the *first* words of the text, 'Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more;' and the latter part specially to the more enlightened and unprejudiced; 'but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.'

The first class of errors, it may be thought, have so long disappeared from the christian Church that it would be a waste of time to dwell upon them now. The observances of the Levitical law are, indeed, no longer maintained by

any professed Christians, and the only approach to them which exists in the present age, is in the rites and ceremonies of the Romish Church. Wheresoever these are found to militate against the great fundamental truths of the Gospel, we are bound, as the primitive Christians were enjoined by St. Paul to do, to renounce and abjure them as acts of rebellion against the Lord.

To repeat a daily sacrifice, for instance, not as commemorative, but as a real and efficacious atonement through the ministrations of the priest, we hold to be a corruption of gospel simplicity, and a detraction from the virtue of that one great oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world made by our Saviour on the Cross. With such a corruption we can keep no terms. We reject it entirely and at once, as founded in gross error, and as the parent of a world of superstition, exalting the human priesthood at the expense of that one Great High Priest, who is the author and finisher of our faith, and enslaving the minds of ignorant men to a mysterious power of human contrivance.

I give this as a pregnant example of those religious errors, with which no compromise ought to be made, inasmuch as they strike at the root of all true doctrine. There are others which might be enumerated of a similar kind, such as the worship of images and relics, prayers addressed to the Virgin and to the Saints for their intercession with God, all of them not only without warrant from Scripture, but practically hurtful to the cause of the Gospel, and diverting men's minds from Him, who is alone 'the way, the truth, and the life,' the only sure guide and captain of our salvation.

It is not in reference, then, to points such as these, that we are directed to be indulgent and forbearing, to make concessions, to suspend our judgments, to treat them as matters of indifference, or to abstain from a firm and earnest

vindication of our faith: although even in these, when they originate not in profaneness but in error, we cannot be too careful how we wantonly hurt the feelings, or angrily and fiercely attack the character of those with whom our dispute may lie. Besides the uselessness of such a proceeding, which has a tendency rather to harden the opponent, and to shut his mind more obstinately against conviction, the practice has an injurious effect upon our own minds, and often creates a self-delusion, leading us to imagine that when we are really gratifying the eagerness of our own passions, we are zealous only for the honour of God. But whenever *vital* points of doctrine are at stake, we must then be resolute and unbending, not give way by submission, 'no, not for an hour,' however inoffensive and conciliating our tone and *manner* may be, and indeed ought to be, towards those who sincerely differ from us.

The fault, however, to which mankind are most prone is, not a stubborn, inflexible adherence to what they erroneously deem essential truth, but an intolerant spirit towards those who disagree in what is *not* essential, and a busy inquisitorial disposition to sift and canvass their opinions, and to bring something to light which they construe as incompatible with sound doctrine.

Now, although it is undoubtedly a duty of all those who take up the cross of Christ to make a sacrifice even of the pleasures of social life, whenever they are plainly incompatible with his service, and with the open profession of faith in Him; yet we are bound also, in the same spirit of charity which pervades the whole of his Gospel, not to present unnecessary difficulties in the way of those who are willing to come to Him: we are bound not to deter, but to invite disciples; not to alarm, but to encourage the hearers of the word; not to give causeless offence to the conscience, but to remove, as far as we can with safety to gospel truth, all hindrances and impediments in a brother's

way; and to lessen, rather than to aggravate, the force of those natural causes which are always obstructing the progress of spiritual truth among men.

Far, indeed, be it from the mind of any christian teacher to lower the tone of christian morals, to make a compromise with any vicious habit or propensity, to foster a careless security as to the state of the soul, or to represent the demand which God makes upon our heart and affections, as less entire or less unqualified than it really is. But among men who are not chargeable with this offence, and often, indeed, among those who inculcate this view of the Gospel most zealously, there is a disposition observed to insist with more than justifiable rigour upon certain points of doctrinal interpretation as essential to a saving faith.

Thus it is sometimes insisted that an internal consciousness of being in spiritual communion with Christ is the only test of a true believer. I will not now enlarge upon that more dangerous error which has long distracted the Church, and which is a grievous stumbling-block and rock of offence with many a humble and devout disciple, that each man's doom is already settled, whether for death or life. But there are modes of teaching the necessity of regeneration and of conversion, which have a similar revolting effect, and which have often, it is to be feared, turned back those who were entering on the right path, and have made them judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, because they are sensible of a very wide difference between the state and disposition of their own minds, and that perfect spiritual devotedness which they have been taught to attribute to the converted soul.

Now, in a question of this high and difficult nature, so far removed from the ordinary range of our faculties, it is surely unbecoming in any man to prescribe more exact limitations to the revealed truth than the clear and uniform unequivocal language of Scripture warrants. I say the

uniform language of Scripture, for it is in Holy Scripture, as in all other compositions, that language is found to be a variable and imperfect medium, the same words not always used precisely in the same signification, but requiring the aid of the context, and of other kindred passages, in order to determine their proper force and meaning in the passage under consideration.

When, therefore, a latitude and variety of meaning is unquestionable, and when according to one sense the conscience of a brother is offended, and according to another his mind is comforted and his faith strengthened, it is at least presumptuous in us to decide with peremptory rigour, and to deny to him the benefits of the Gospel, or to disturb his peace because he accepts a signification varying in degree, or in some slight circumstance, from our own.

At the same time, be it remembered, that it is each man's duty to search out the truth of divine things, according to the best of his ability, and of the helps and opportunities that are before him. 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good,' is an apostolic precept, the force of which I would be far from endeavouring to weaken; but it is a precept liable to mistake and abuse, and it is against the abuse only that my cautions are now directed.

For instance, that which I have by diligent study satisfied myself to be the just interpretation, I am bound to adhere to in my own person, and to make my conduct and thoughts as far as possible conformable to it. But it by no means follows, that I am bound to impose the same yoke upon others, whose judgments are different from my own, or that I have any right to try them by my own conscience in matters concerning which a sincere difference of opinion may be entertained among members of the same common faith. We may be firmly persuaded of an opinion, and yet not authorised to require that persuasion in others. How

instructive, then, to Christians of this age and of every age, are the records we have in the apostolic writings of religious disputes prevailing in the primitive Church. Most of them, we know, originated in the religious persuasions of the Jewish converts, persuasions formed long before the preaching of the Gospel; *prejudices,* we call them, because we have the authority of an Apostle for discarding their obligation. Yet even he does not condemn them, except when they interfere with the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

It was going far for him who had himself been a rigid observer of such things, to treat them as matters of indifference. Yet even he does not declare that they are altogether matters of indifference *to the individual* whose conscience is not yet enlightened on the subject. And here lies the edifying character of the whole example. We have no right, he says, however convinced we may be of the little importance of these things, to disregard them or to despise them, if by so doing we hurt the feelings or endanger the conscience of a weak brother. In this respect they become at once invested with importance, inasmuch as the happiness or the safety of another may be involved in the question.

There is not, perhaps, a passage in the whole body of the Epistles more full of instruction, in doubtful matters of daily occurrence, than this, from which my text is taken. 'To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died. . . . . For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.' (*Rom.* xiv. 14, 15, 20.)

Having, then, received this explicit authority, or rather this authoritative injunction to avoid an unnecessary rigour, and to speak the truth in charity, it surely becomes us, in all re-

ligious disputes arising out of various interpretations of God's word, to make allowance for the errors, as they may seem to us to be, of those who differ from us; not, indeed, to compromise the truth, but to be cautious and forbearing how we press that upon others as indispensable and as inseparable from the right understanding of the Gospel, which they cannot yet regard in the same light, although they agree with us in all the essential points, and build their faith upon the same foundation of the writings of the Apostles and Prophets with ourselves. In cases of this kind, let us always seek for means of union rather than for grounds of separation; let us endeavour to reconcile opinions which have many and great points in common, instead of seeking to discover differences which, however real, yet do not impair the fundamental truths in connection with which they are found.

To take the single example of Baptismal regeneration.

That baptism is the initiation into spiritual life—that life which our Saviour procured for us, and which through the influence of the Holy Spirit will be for ever maintained within us—no man can deny who receives the written word of the New Testament. But the precise moment of its communication, or the commencement of its operation—the gradual progress and growth of this divine grace—the degree in which it aids the natural man, and resists the powers of evil within him—all these are among the hidden things of God. They are not necessary to our spiritual welfare, and, therefore, they are not revealed. To start curious questions, therefore, on this subject—to argue them boldly and vehemently—to charge those who differ from us with denial of the power of the ordinance of baptism, or again, on the other hand, with a superstitious exaggeration of it, may be a worse error, a more grievous offence against the Gospel of Christ, than to form an imperfect notion, yet with humility and sincerity, of some part of this mysterious doctrine.

That baptism is necessary to a Christian, that the form of it was prescribed by our Lord himself, that those who duly receive it are made his children by adoption and grace,—these are wholesome and necessary truths—truths in which nearly the whole christian world has been agreed from the earliest times. But when questions are proposed, what constitutes the due performance of baptism—how soon the divine influence operates—how much may depend upon the corresponding action of the baptized person's mind—at what age it ought to be administered,—all these are matters on which much subtle disputation has not only been idly but mischievously spent. In Scripture there is no positive solution of them to be found. Yet there are reasons to be adduced from Scripture for and against the several tenets of the contending parties; and it is, doubtless, the duty of a Christian to adhere as closely as possible to that doctrine which to himself seems to possess the greatest probability, and to be supported by the best authority. But he is not bound to require the same acquiescence in his opinion from others, on pain of their forfeiting the whole benefit of the ordinance in case of disagreement.

Neither is he justified in seceding from the Church, unless he is convinced that the Church is in a grievous and fundamental error, such as we hold the Church of Rome is to this day; much less is any man justified in forming a new party, or sect, adopting a new name, either the name of a leader, or of some favourite preacher, or any other fanciful distinction.

It is in questions of this kind that the *authority of the Church* claims the submission of all true believers, not merely as evidence of the early practice and opinion of Christians, although that alone is superior to any man's private opinion, but as a *means of concord*, which cannot be preserved among men unless some concession be made of

individual judgment to the collective sense of the governing Body. It is only in matters not positively commanded or expressly revealed in Scripture that the authority of the Church is claimed. And even then it is asserted, not with the impious arrogance of the Romish See, as possessing equal claim to submission with the word of God, but as the nearest approach we can make to a right judgment in doubtful matters, and as the safest guide for individuals amidst endless diversities of opinion. The decision of the Church, then, in its reformed state, is not placed as a stumbling-block in a brother's way. He is not told that his error will forfeit his salvation; but he is taught and admonished not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; not to pretend conscience, when he is in fact impelled by faction, or strife, or personal dislike, or an overweening conceit and confidence in himself; and he is warned, whether right or wrong, not rashly to venture upon opposing his single opinion to the deliberate sense of the Church of God.

In most of these questions, however, which have at various periods agitated the christian world, especially the reformed part of it, it is curious to observe how little the genuine essentials of gospel truth have been affected by them. When not engaged in the controversy, the pious preacher has generally taught, and the devout hearer has generally believed, all the vital doctrines of redemption. Not that controversy is in itself wrong—for where important error is taught it must be combated—but the heat of controversy, and the dislike engendered by it, tend to give an undue importance to the points in dispute, and to sink the due importance of other questions, although incalculably more momentous than they, and thus not only to place a stumbling-block in the way, by exciting unkind and uncharitable feelings, but by turning the attention from the weightier

matters of the law to those minor considerations about which the dispute usually turns.*

I will not now enter into a minute consideration of those ritual observances, concerning which some variation of practice has been found to exist in different Churches, although the letter of the law enjoins uniformity, and every clergyman engages to obey that law. But I avoid the discussion of these things in detail, because I am convinced it leads to no good end, except when the variation seems to arise from carelessness and indifference on the part of the minister, which is a thing severely to be reproved, and more especially if it be adopted for his own ease, or to lessen his own share of duty. A departure from any rule, in order to gratify this inclination, cannot be censured too severely. Let the deviation be ever so slight, the motive makes it sinful, and in a clergyman such a sin is doubly grievous, if it give offence even to weak brethren. He then not only sins against his own soul, but he gives great occasion to the enemies of his Lord to blaspheme. 'If one man sin against another,' said the aged high priest Eli to his profligate sons, 'the judge shall judge him, but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?' And so do I say to you, my young friends of the common ministry, in the presence of the congregation. Whatever you do in the church, let it be seriously and conscientiously done, as the Apostle bids us, with a view to edification. Think not of yourselves, but of those whom you are appointed to instruct, to admonish, and to bring forward in the way of salvation. Lead them not to imagine that there is any saving virtue in one ceremony, or in one posture, more than in another. But impress upon them the duty of humility, and concord, and love; and show by your own example that you seek their good, and not your own

* See *Thoughts on Infant Baptism*.—Ed.

ease, or pleasure, or profit in any of those things which contentious persons may find fault with as not being exactly according to the letter of the law, although they are perfectly in unison with its spirit. Seek not to attract attention to such things, much less to provoke or to risk controversy about them. If ever a perplexity should arise as to your own duty, you may consult the Authority under which you are placed, not to indulge curiosity, or to start needless difficulties, but to satisfy your own minds, and to dispel uneasy doubts, and to have an answer to give to gainsayers. Whatever the Authorities placed over you may direct, conformably to our canons, you are bound to obey; but trifling variations, sanctioned by long and general usage, and not introduced for a sake of change, or from any irreverent or worldly motive, cannot, unless when forbidden by authority, be regarded as offences, neither ought they to be made subjects of serious complaint by any individuals. Let any who are so disposed remember the admonition of St. Paul in a case strikingly similar. 'Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.' 'For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' (*Rom.* xiv. 19, 17.)

Whenever then, unhappily for the Church, a disposition prevails to magnify lesser points and to dogmatise in a peremptory manner on things which the Scripture seems to have left either free and undecided, or but partially revealed, be it our care to keep the Church united, as far as we can, instead of dividing it—inculcating the sin of causeless division, and the duty of conformity in all matters of inferior moment, and deprecating the attempt of imposing straiter terms of communion on our brethren than Scripture itself plainly warrants. And where they complain that their understanding is not satisfied, reminding them that in

matters above the reach of human understanding, this must needs be the case. Whereas in all that really concerns the salvation of our souls, the doctrine of the Church is intelligible to the humblest hearer of the word of God; and he may be assured that just in proportion to his humility, that doctrine is likely to be edifying and profitable to his soul.

And now, my beloved brethren, let me conclude with an earnest and affectionate exhortation, that you will honour this work of love and true piety, in those who have enlarged the borders of your sanctuary, and freely furnished the means of grace to many hundreds who were heretofore excluded; honour it not only by thanks and praise, but let it raise a correspondent feeling of piety and love in your own minds. May you resort to it, as the house of prayer, not less than of hearing the word of God. And when listening to the word, may you ever bear in mind the precept of our Lord, 'Take heed how ye hear,' remembering that the good and honest heart is that 'which having heard the word, *keeps it*, and brings forth fruit with patience.'

When such an one enters the house dedicated to God's service, it is not to gratify himself by hearing some new thing, or by listening even to man's eloquence, but to repent of his sins, and to pray for the aid of the Holy Spirit in amending his life, and to meditate on his Redeemer's love. All the thoughts, and hopes, and resolutions which occupied his mind when he last performed his devotions in it, will to such a mind habitually return, and the mere sight of the table of the Lord will dispose him to serious recollection and to earnest prayer.

And when he leaves that house, he will carry into the bosom of his family, and among his friends, the best evidence that he is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, studying to make his daily life and conversation agreeable to the doctrines he has heard, by restraining his

tongue from evil, and his heart from malice; by kindness and brotherly love to his neighbours, and by encouraging them to seek for happiness by the same means which have brought peace, and comfort, and heavenly joy to his own soul.

Now to the Saviour of all that trust in Him, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour, and glory, and praise, and thanksgiving, in all churches of the saints, world without end.

SERMON X.

THE LORD'S LONG-SUFFERING.

2 Peter iii. 9.

'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is *long-suffering* to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'

IT was undoubtedly a common persuasion among the early Christians, that the second coming of our Lord was then near at hand; and nothing was more usual than to apply the term *latter days, last days,* to their own time. This persuasion is never either positively confirmed or positively controverted by the inspired writers. They seem to have borne in mind the final declaration of our Lord, 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.' (*Acts* i. 7.) And they are content to guard the Church from falling into the practical errors most likely to arise out of the opinion, namely, an impatience for the final consummation of the gospel promises; an error very similar to that which possessed the minds of the disciples during the ministry of our Lord. *They* were continually intent upon the manifestation of Himself as the Messiah. They longed to see the signs from heaven, and the display of supernatural power, and the glories of his kingdom upon earth; but as often as they betrayed this feeling, and presumed to urge Him upon the subject, or to provoke Him to an exercise of his great office in destroying his enemies, He always rebuked their impatience, and refused to gratify their curiosity.

Precisely in the same spirit did many of the early converts to Christianity express a longing expectation for the visible glories of the Lord's second appearance. The mistake seems to have been carried so far among the Thessalonians, that many of them imagined that those who died before his second coming, might lose the benefit of it, or at least that those who should then be alive upon the earth would have some advantage over them. This error St. Paul corrects in his first epistle to that Church, and he cautions them against entertaining an anxious looking out for the day of the Lord, exhorting them only to be in a constant state of watchfulness as to the condition of their own souls, that they might never be taken unawares. The day itself he does not pretend to know, any more than they. It 'so cometh,' he says, 'as a thief in the night.' (1 *Thess.* v. 2.) This is a point which I am not commissioned to inform you of. It is not requisite to your spiritual welfare. On the contrary, its very uncertainty is a means of promoting that welfare, for it ought to lead you always to watch and pray, to look to your own ways carefully, and to maintain a closer communion with the Holy Spirit, when you know not but that the hour of danger is already at hand. Such is the tenor of St. Paul's exhortation to them upon this part of the subject; but as to the notion that it will make any difference to them whether they die before the second coming of the Lord or not, he speaks with the most absolute certainty, and puts down the erroneous opinion with authority. 'For this we say unto you *by the word of the Lord,* that we which are alive, shall not prevent' (*i.e.* have precedence of) 'them which are asleep. The dead,' indeed, 'in Christ shall rise first;* then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord.' (1 *Thess.* iv. 15, &c.)

We learn, indeed, from the Second Epistle to Timothy,

* πρῶτον, not πρῶτοι.

that two disciples there named, Hymeneus and Philetus, had taught a dangerous heresy, founded upon this false expectation, namely, that the Resurrection was already past; and, instead of regarding our Lord's Resurrection as, what it really is, 'the firstfruits of them that slept,' they had converted it into an argument against a future state, and teaching men probably to expect a temporal kingdom of Christ over the saints upon earth.

All speculations of this kind the Apostle advises Timothy to reject as vain and mischievous: 'Their word will eat,' he says, 'as doth a canker;' that is, it tends to lead men further and further away from the truth, and to diffuse its poisonous influence through the Church. If once we quit the plain path of Revelation, and indulge in fancies and theories of our own, the corruption soon spreads, the simplicity of the Gospel is destroyed, and the souls of men are wantonly hazarded to gratify the vanity of some ambitious or bold interpreter.

It is remarkable that St. Peter also, when touching upon the error before noticed, viz. the impatience of believers, saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' and when bidding them not to be perplexed or disheartened by the long delay, uses the same illustration to denote the secrecy and suddenness of our Lord's second coming: 'The day of the Lord will come,' he also affirms, 'as a thief in the night.' There will be no token, no warning, no indulgence to those who have neglected to make due provision for it. And after a glowing description of the terrors of this day of visitation, he too, like St. Paul, winds up the prophecy with the same grand practical lesson: 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' (2 *Peter* iii. 11.)

The harmony which is observable in the doctrine of these two Apostles on this interesting point, is also conspicuous throughout the whole body of the sacred writings. Nothing

is revealed to gratify curiosity merely; nothing even to convey the knowledge of natural things, or to improve our social condition, which we have the means of acquiring by the exercise of our own reason; nothing, in short, but what has a tendency, more or less direct, to establish our faith, to regulate our lives, to comfort and purify our hearts, and to promote our salvation.

Thus our Saviour refuses to determine a disputed point of legal right submitted to Him: 'Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?' Thus He puts off the fond inquiry, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' with the startling admonition, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gait;' that is, be not busy and inquisitive about the fate of others; seek not to know whether there be few or many that enter into life, but come to the consideration of that awful question with a deep sense of your own duty and your own danger. Make that the great object of all your thoughts, your anxieties, and your endeavours. It is quite enough to engage your whole attention, and leave in the hands of God the execution of his own counsels towards the rest of mankind.

I forbear to speak particularly now of other examples of the same kind. But they will occur to the recollection of every diligent reader of Scripture; and I have said enough to impress upon your minds the valuable truth to be derived from them all; that the improvement of the heart, not of the understanding; that spiritual instruction, not the increase of natural knowledge, not the improvement of civil society, is the peculiar object of the Bible; and that even the knowledge of *heavenly things* is no further revealed to us than as it may serve to our edification; to the making us fit for the enjoyment of that inheritance to which we are called by our Redeemer.

It is, then, the part of true wisdom, not to endeavour to penetrate into the mysteries of the invisible world (for our present faculties are not designed for such objects, and

are probably incapable of comprehending them), but to draw from every part of Revelation, as well as from every dispensation of Providence, some lesson of profit to ourselves; something that shall direct and regulate our own lives, correct our errors, elevate our desires, increase our faith, enliven our devotion, mend our hearts and affections, and guard us against temptations.

Is the performance of some divine promise, for instance, unexpectedly delayed, far beyond the term our eager hopes had assigned to it? Consider, as St. Peter here bids us do, the immeasurable distance between the Divine nature and the human; between the transient interests of this fleeting life and the purposes of eternity, and you will at once see the folly of calling that slowness in God's dispensations, which merely exceeds the measure of time usually employed for carrying into execution some work of human contrivance. Cast your eyes upon the fabric of the world around you; upon the boundless ocean, upon the everlasting mountains, and the broad surface of the cultivated earth. Do they resemble in any of their characters the productions of human skill or wisdom? Look to the glorious host of heaven, the same now as at the moment of their creation, without decay or the shadow of change, and then ask your own reason, whether the Maker of these stupendous works can be expected to carry on his operations in measures of time at all corresponding with the hopes and fears, and short-sighted views of his creatures. 'Man cometh up, and is cut down like a flower.' Generations pass away in rapid succession, which, to the eye of the Creator and Governor of all things, 'who inhabiteth eternity,' and embraces at one view the past, the present, and the future, are but as the shadows of a summer's cloud to our apprehension, when they pass rapidly over the scene that is spread before us.

Vain, therefore, is it to reason about God's proceedings, and the probable advancement of his dispensations from

anything connected with our own experience. If a powerful man, or a neighbour, defers the fulfilment of a promise, we naturally enough compare the time of his delay with the probable duration of his life, and complain with reason, if he permits years to pass away, when the period of his life is short, and fast expiring. But with God this mode of reasoning can have no place. A moment's reflection is sufficient to remind us that his promises are made and are performed in eternity. We can no more judge of the proper time for their execution, than we can pretend to regulate the course of nature in the universe. Let us then keep to our proper province, and remember the words of the patriarch Job, when perplexed with such speculations. 'God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof' (of wisdom). 'For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.' (*Job* xxviii. 23, 24, 28.)

But the admonition of St. Peter is carried yet further. He not only checks the presumption of those who talk of the slowness of God's counsels, intruding into those 'things which they have not seen,' and never can look into, but he convicts them of folly also in missing that which they *might have seen*, and which is full of edifying instruction to us all. Although we know not what is slow or otherwise in God's dealings, as they affect the whole race of mankind, yet we are well able to see, and it is our duty to see and understand this slowness as it relates individually to *ourselves*. There is a lesson contained in it, which the simplest may read, and which the wisest ought to profit by. This apparent slowness of God is in reality *long-suffering* to us-ward.

It should be regarded as a continual warning not to put off the day of repentance and amendment of life—not to slight the overtures of divine mercy; not to provoke the Lord by obstinate disobedience, and rejection of his word;

and it should operate as a call upon our *love*, not less than an awful appeal to our *fears*. Is the just judgment of God suspended? Oh, let the mercy of the Judge not be thrown away upon us; let it incline us still more humbly and earnestly to implore his favour, and to render ourselves deserving of his goodness. Do we complain of the short time we have to live? The shorter the term of our natural life, the more kind and merciful is this forbearance; and if that forbearance be slighted, who can deny that the guilt of the offender is deepened, and a greater load of punishment wilfully laid up for himself, and by himself, against the day of judgment?

After this manner, too, St. Paul reasons in his Epistle to the Romans (chap. ii.). The judgment of God, sooner or later, we are sure, is according to truth against sinners. It is impossible that God, however He may overlook them now, should make no difference ultimately between the righteous and the wicked. 'Despisest thou,' he says, in a strain of holy indignation to the hardened sinner, 'Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.' (*Rom.* ii. 4, 5.)

Nothing can be more just and forcible than the conclusion here drawn. If there be any difference between right and wrong—if God be just, a time must come when a full retribution shall be made. Again, if God has made known to us his will by his Son, who hath reconciled us to Him, and hath given us the Holy Spirit to make us acceptable and fit for his presence; although the visible glories of Christ's kingdom are not yet revealed, and generation after generation of men drop into the grave, before the dispensation is

finally closed; surely every sincere believer will guard against the sin of indifference and forgetfulness in return for the forbearance and long-suffering of God.

The vengeance of God in each case will be proportionate to the obstinacy and ingratitude of the sinner. The more that has been done for him without producing its due effect, the heavier will the sentence be in the day of visitation.

But it is not so much the spirit of vengeance which breathes in this passage, as the spirit of compassion and mercy. For what says the text?

'God is long-suffering to us-ward, *not willing* that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' It is not with a view to heighten the punishment of the rebellious, but to lessen their number; to enlarge the fold of Christ; to bring over more and more of the thoughtless sons of men to the way of salvation, that He puts off the execution of his purpose, and permits no man to know whether a single day or a thousand years shall elapse before it is accomplished.

Thus, too, it was in the older dispensation. Often were prophets commissioned to declare to the people of Israel and Judah that the patience of the Almighty was well nigh exhausted; that He will be no longer trifled with; that He will cast them off for ever. But an interval of penitence and amendment succeeds, and the divine vengeance is suspended; the accents of love and mercy are again heard; the Israelites are affectionately invited to consult their own interests—to take the benefit of the time allowed them before it be too late—to come in and accept the gracious offer of pardon which is now before them, and which may never again be placed within their reach.

And in the same moving strain does God now speak to us Christians by the word of his Apostles. 'Save yourselves from this untoward generation.' 'To-day, while it is called

to-day, harden not your hearts, but turn to the Lord, for he is merciful, and to your God, for he will abundantly pardon.'

To a pious and considerate Christian, hardly a week or even a day can pass without affording some ground of thankfulness for the continuance of his life, and some speaking lesson in what befalls either himself or those around him, of the proper use to be made of this protracted trial. Has he met with any serious accident, or with any narrow escape? The first thought that should engage his mind is, was I in a state fit to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ? Had I sincerely repented of my sins, and was I living in a sense of God's all-seeing providence, of his hatred of sin, and of the certain judgment which awaits it? Was I then really or only nominally a disciple of his blessed Son? Was there any corrupt purpose in my heart, any impure thought, any design of doing wrong to another, or any malicious or uncharitable feeling towards him?

Or if no deliberate purpose of this kind was in my heart, no anger or ill-will towards a neighbour, no undutiful feeling towards a parent, a child, or a friend, yet, had I done all in my power to compensate for any wrong or any unkindness, which I had before done? Was there no quarrel or offence for which I had not yet made due atonement; no service or acts of love and duty done to me which I had not sufficiently acknowledged or requited?. These are among the thoughts which naturally first occupy the mind of a man who has received an unexpected summons to leave this world; and he longs for a respite to be granted him, that he may prove the sincerity of his resolutions; that he may discharge his debts, and requite the favours he has received, and give proofs of his charity and his forgiveness.

Now these feelings which nature teaches us under such circumstances to indulge towards our fellow-creatures, every page of Scripture warns us to cherish towards God, and to

revive within us, as often as they grow dull and inactive, by all the expedients which the course of human life throws in our way.

The close of the old year and the commencement of a new one; the entering upon some new line of duty or employment; the recurrence of a sacred season, authorised and appointed by the Church; the public worship on the Lord's day, and other stated days; a baptism or a funeral in our family; nay, the weekly duties of every Lord's day, and more especially the commemoration of our Redeemer's death and passion in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper,—all these are occasions when we may with the best effect turn to a review of our daily mode of life, to an examination of our thoughts, and words, and deeds, since the period of our last solemn humiliation before the throne of Grace. And if (as must in a greater or less degree be the case with us all) we find that sin is still an inmate of the flesh, that the wiles of Satan have seduced us, and the infirmities of a corrupt nature have often prevailed, and have often dimmed the heavenly light of the Gospel within us, let us, with grateful and fervent hearts, thank God that we were not cut off in the midst of our sins. Let us acknowledge the riches of his goodness in having so long spared us; and let this forbearance be a convincing proof that He is still calling us to Him; that we have still an interest in Him; that He willeth not *that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

On the other important truths contained in this memorable passage of St. Peter, I will not now enlarge; but it is one of the plainest declarations to be found in Scripture of the universal redemption effected by our Saviour's death, and of the gracious purpose to extend its benefits to all mankind who are willing to receive it. The will of God is that *all* should come to repentance. There is no confinement of it, as was once ignorantly supposed, even by Peter himself, to the race of Israel; no personal restriction to a select few, as being

alone the objects of the Redeemer's love; no forbidding sentence against any of the sons of men, except those who prefer the service of sin to that of God, who turn a deaf ear to his promises, or who 'despise his long-suffering' and forbearance, and turn it, wickedly and ungratefully turn it, *not* into an argument for repentance, but for continuance in sin, or at least for a neglect of religious duties and a devotion to the things of this world.

Let none of you, my brethren, so abuse the goodness of God. You thank Him in your prayers for the preservation of your lives. Let your lives bear witness that these thanks are sincere; that you feel the value of that life which He has given you as the introduction to a better. Your present existence will then be not only a source of enjoyment in itself, but it will be the means of bringing you, through repentance and faith in his Son, to the enjoyment of a life where sin and sorrow, and sickness are unknown; and no fearful expectation will hang over you, as does in this world, of an end to all its happiness; but the joy shall be as solid and lasting as it is now faint and transitory, and ever liable to be snatched away from you.

To Him, then, who hath called us out of this state of darkness to the glorious light of the Gospel, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all glory, and honour, and praise, and thanksgiving, now and for evermore.

SERMON XI.

THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.*

John ii. 11.

'This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.'

OF the efficacy of our Lord's miracles in confirming his divine mission, hardly anything remains to be said which is not already familiar to the minds of those who hear me. That no one could do the miracles which He did, except God were with him, is the declaration of common sense, when free from prejudice and the spirit of contention; and, accordingly, we find that the old ground of imputing these mighty works to the agency of evil spirits has long been abandoned, or, if ever assumed, is maintained only for the sake of argument by those who disbelieve the agency of evil spirits as much as they do the divine mission of our Lord. The dispute has been reduced, therefore, to a question of fact, and, as a question of fact, surely no case was ever more triumphant; the character and circumstances of our Saviour's miracles being such as distinguish them essentially from all

* There is something rather remarkable in the history of this Sermon. The main substance of it had been stated to me by a friend, who had been struck with a sermon he had heard in which this view was taken. I repeated this to Dr. Copleston, who was so much struck with it that he thereupon composed the following discourse, which I heard him preach for the first time. From recollection of this, I afterwards myself wrote a sermon, which has been since published.—Ed.

the impostures and delusions which have ever been exhibited to the world under the name of miracle.

Some of these peculiarities are well deserving of our consideration, not as evidence merely of the fact, but as pregnant with instruction, and as strikingly illustrative of the character of our divine Master. He had in Himself, it is true, the fulness of the Godhead bodily, his power and perfections were divine, but his virtues, also, were human virtues; and from these *supernatural* acts of beneficence, mingled, as they were, with compassionate and social feelings, and called forth by the passing occasion, we may learn how we ought to feel on the like occasions, and how it becomes us to employ our natural faculties and means for the benefit of our fellow-creatures. It is, indeed, truly remarkable that almost all the miracles recorded of our Saviour are of a beneficent kind; directed towards the relief either of bodily or spiritual wants, towards the cure of some unhappy sufferer, or to the confirmation of faith in the minds of his hearers. Hardly any of them can appear, even to the most careless reader, to have been wrought for the mere display of power; and upon an attentive examination, they will *all*, I believe, be found to have some other end in view. Neither were they directed ever to his personal ease and advantage, except where the object of his ministry required that He should not fall a premature sacrifice to the malice of his enemies. And thus do they impart a striking lesson how power should be used, and for what purposes it is given to men; how the evils of life may be made the parents of blessing; and how they are thrown in our way for this very end, to excite our sympathy, and give scope to virtuous action.

But, besides this moral and religious edification, it has been thought by some expositors that a mystical meaning also is contained under each of these memorable actions; that they are typical of some part of the gospel economy of grace; and that in their spiritual import they speak a language

intelligible to the Church through all ages. Such is the opinion not merely of that visionary school of interpreters known by the name of Hutchinsonian, who fancy they see a symbolical character in every fact, historical and physical, recorded in the Sacred Writings, and who imagine that the visible world, in all its details, is emblematic of the invisible —it is the grave judgment of one of the most ingenious and accomplished members of our Church, the learned Jortin, who has pursued this method of interpretation through all the miracles recorded of our Saviour, and has endeavoured to elicit from each some spiritual signification, regarding them either as apt emblems of his designs, or as figures representing future events, and especially the benefits to be conferred by Him upon mankind. Thus (according to these interpreters), his giving sight to the blind was typical of his enlightening the world by his doctrine; his healing the sick, of his being the Physician of the soul; his feeding the hungry, of his preaching the Gospel to the poor; his casting out evil spirits, of the prevalence of his religion over vice and idolatry throughout the world. After this manner he explains the whole series; and of the miraculous conversion of water into wine, in particular, he observes, There arose in the Church from ancient times heretics, who condemned wine, and the use of animal food, and marriage, and even many of the orthodox conceived extravagant notions of the merit of celibacy, and of a solitary abstemious life; Christ, therefore, he says, may be supposed to have attended this feast, and honoured it with this miracle, that it should stand in the Gospel as a confutation of these foolish errors; adding, that St. John, who records the miracle, lived to see such false doctrines prevail.

Now, I confess that this mode of interpretation, ingenious as it may be, and occasionally useful, appears to call for great caution in its application, and to be by no means free from serious objection. Where the plain and direct signification is enough for all religious purposes; where the imme-

diate end answered by the miracle is adequate and worthy of the occasion, full of benevolence and full of instruction, it seems to be a false, and, perhaps, a dangerous refinement, to seek for some hidden design, discoverable only in after ages, and even then a matter of doubt and conjecture.

That such remarkable events in Sacred History should, in the course of our preaching, be accommodated to moral and religious instruction of various kinds, is very allowable; even where no allegory is intended, the figurative adaptation of them to the argument we are enforcing is often awakening and impressive. But it is a practice which has been carried to a vicious excess, and which, under the guidance of a warm imagination, has a strong tendency to corrupt the simplicity of gospel truth, to convert religion into a species of romance, and in place of sober and sincere devotion to substitute the reveries of enthusiasm.

The ingenious critic, whose interpretation I have just adduced, is himself fully aware of the mischievous tendency of the Hutchinsonian creed, and he rejects it in the strongest terms; but in his own exposition there is a feature somewhat similar, and which alone gives rise to alarm and suspicion. I mean where he announces it as his belief that *every* miracle of our Lord is allegorical; that it is not only capable of such interpretation, but that it *requires* it. This declaration alone savours of that love of *system* which is the parent of so much error and so much evil in the world. Accordingly, having once undertaken the inquiry upon this principle, he is led to such forced interpretations as these,—that our Saviour's rebuking the winds and waves was an emblem of his spiritual victories over the mad rage of Jews and Gentiles; that his walking upon the sea was a prelude of the amazing progress of his Gospel, which crossed the wide ocean, and reached the remotest lands; that the darkness at the crucifixion showed the spiritual blindness of the Jewish people, and the earthquakes indicated the great revo-

lutions which were to take place in the establishment of the Gospel. (JORTIN'S *Ecclesiastical History*, book ii. part i. pp. 270–274.)

That this miracle performed at the marriage feast may fairly be adduced in refutation of the doctrine enjoining celibacy and austerity, I would by no means deny; but that such was its drift and design seems to me far from probable, for, if ever the sanctity of marriage or the lawfulness of temperate festivity were called in question, the *presence* of our Lord on that occasion, and his participation in the feast, would surely be a sufficient answer; nor can I persuade myself that a rational Christian would wish for any higher sanction.

At the same time, this does seem to stand distinguished from his other miracles, in not carrying with it that manifest air of charity, benevolence, and dignity which is characteristic of them, and which mark *them* out so plainly to be a divine work.

No one will pretend that the want here supplied was an urgent claim upon his compassion or philanthropy, nor does the immediate effect, if we look no further than the occasion itself, seem to correspond with the stupendous agency employed.

To the scoffer, therefore, and the unbeliever, it has afforded matter of indecent jesting; while the christian advocate has been embarrassed in his defence, and has sometimes injured his cause by warmly maintaining the importance of the action in its literal sense.

It is, then, a case which seems fairly to admit of some attempt at typical explanation, if any such explanation can be offered, showing at once its close connection with the christian scheme, and the high import of those external symbols which were adapted to the occasion.

The remarks which I have already made on the danger and the presumption of allegorising Scripture further than

is authorised by inspired persons, will, I trust, secure me from the suspicion of being inclined to trespass in that way myself.

For the present, I will bespeak your attention to the peculiar circumstances of the miracle in question. In the first place, it is remarkable that St. John alone, of all the Evangelists, records this fact; and, as we shall see presently, it seems to have an intimate connection with some points upon which that Evangelist dwells most earnestly, and which form a characteristic feature in his writings. It will be proper, therefore, to recall to your minds the precise circumstances of the transaction.

Within a few days after our Saviour's baptism, when He publicly entered upon his ministry, and received the testimony of not only the Baptist but of the Holy Ghost himself, we are told that this marriage feast was celebrated. The particulars mentioned are few, but the narrative, if attentively considered, leads one to believe that our Saviour had given some intimation to his family of his design to perform a notable action upon that day.

Of his mysterious character and future greatness they were now not ignorant.

The recent attestation of the Baptist had revived the exalted hopes of his mother, hopes long ago raised by the salutation of angels and the clear voice of prophecy; his chosen disciples had just been collected about Him, and in this, which was the first numerous assemblage He had joined after his baptism, it seems to have been confidently expected that some signal act would announce to the world his real office and destiny.

The command given by his mother to the servants, as well as her own impatience in addressing Him, as the day advanced, and the feast was now drawing to a close, are strong proofs of this expectation. The answer, too, of our Lord to the words of his mother is hardly to be understood on any

other supposition than that she accosted Him with a view to prompt Him to execute what had been announced, and to put an end to their suspense.

The import of that answer is perfectly in unison with the whole of his conduct whenever his Divine ministry was concerned.

Thus, in his twelfth year, when living in subjection to his parents, He asked them, 'How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' Again, when, during the act of preaching, there were some that told Him that his mother and his brethren were without desiring to speak with Him, He rebuked the interruption by observing, 'Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.' (*Matt.* xii. 48, 50.) And in the same authoritative tone He now observes, 'Leave my official conduct entirely to myself; I know best my sacred duty, and I will perform it at the right time.'

The act itself, therefore, when performed, we might naturally expect would bear some essential relation to that ministry He was about to undertake; and yet, though truly descriptive, that it would be at the same time obscure and emblematical only. For a Messiah, whose *blood was to be shed* for the sins of men, his disciples were by no means as yet prepared to receive. And what more expressive symbol could be devised? What act more decisive of divine power, at the moment, and bearing in it at the same time the seeds of future instruction and consolation, than the miraculous creation of that element which He had designed to make the emblem, through all ages, of his sacrifice upon the cross?

Again, the same narrative informs us that the water thus converted by his word had been provided according to the Jewish customs for the purpose of purification. Water, we

know, was habitually used by them in baptism as an initiatory rite, as it is still continued in the christian Church by our Lord's command; but the Jews' was for the purpose of cleansing themselves from the supposed impurities contracted in the ordinary course of life; impurities, some of which, according to their law, and more, according to their traditions, rendered them unclean in the sight of God. Such was the proper destination of that water here miraculously changed. And does not this change correspond with the whole analogy between the Law and the Gospel? Was it not a conversion of the shadow into its substance—of the type into its antitype—of the imperfect preparatory rite into that prevailing oblation, or rather, I should say, the chosen *representative* of that prevailing oblation, in which all the purifications and atonements of the Mosaic ritual were to be swallowed up? 'In that day,' says the prophet Zechariah, when shadowing out the mighty deliverance, 'in that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.' (*Zech.* xiii. 1.) 'In that day *living waters* shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea. . . . . And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.' (*Zech.* xiv. 8, 9.) And what says the beloved disciple, to whom we are indebted for the preservation of this remarkable transaction?—'If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' (1 *John* i. 7.)

There is, it has often been observed, a striking congruity in the style of the Gospel of St. John with that of the epistles which bear his name, a congruity which would lead any indifferent reader, independently of the external evidence of the fact, to pronounce them all to be the work of the same author. Not only the general complexion is similar,

but there is a remarkable coincidence of phraseology, and the topics which the writer insists upon most earnestly, and which evidently have made the deepest impression on his own mind, are the same in each.

Thus, in the account of the crucifixion, St. John alone observes, that when our Saviour's side was pierced, 'forthwith came thereout blood and water.' This phenomenon has usually been represented as important only because it was a certain proof of death; but the vehement asseveration which follows—'And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe'—seems to point at some truth more significant and mysterious than the simple fact of death, which had already been stated in the plain language of the narrative. Neither do I believe that in that age the anatomical fact, which is supposed to be here alleged, would have been at all received as a convincing and popular evidence of death; even in the present age how few are there who know the fact, or would draw such an inference from it! The argument supposes that the Evangelist regarded this as a *natural* and well-known phenomenon, sufficient to convince a mind unsatisfied with other proofs. But I would appeal to any candid reader of the whole passage, whether it be not evidently recorded by the writer as a phenomenon in his judgment preternatural, as one singular and wonderful, characteristic of the stupendous event he is describing.

And, again, if we turn to the epistle of the same writer, we find the same two substances announced in terms of no ordinary solemnity, and inculcated with an earnestness equally remarkable: 'This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.' (1 *John* v. 6.)

That this Epistle, as well as the Gospel itself, was written to correct heretical opinions then prevalent concerning the

person of Christ, and to establish the sound doctrine of his real humanity, as well as of his real divinity, is generally admitted. But, from these passages which I have quoted, and from others of a kindred character, it seems evident that St. John was strongly impressed with the mystical character of those elements which our Lord chose to be the perpetual sacraments of his Church; water, as the token of regeneration, and wine, as the emblem of his atoning blood. These, says he, together with the witness of the Holy Spirit, given visibly and miraculously in *his age*, and still continued to us in that inspired volume which is our guide unto salvation,—these three are his standing witnesses upon earth, and ever will be witnesses to Him in the Church until his second coming.

At the *commencement*, then, of our Lord's ministry, these witnesses bare record, as far at least as the nature of that ministry would allow them to do in so early a stage. The water at his baptism, the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, with the voice from heaven, and the miraculous exhibition of that appointed symbol of his blood, were all included within the few days before his first journey to Jerusalem. The *close* of his ministry was distinguished by the same testimony, the effusion of water and of blood from his body, and the visible communication of the Holy Ghost to his infant Church.

It is, I know, usually alleged in explanation of the phrase *three witnesses*, that our Lord was proved to be the Son of God by his baptism and by his death, and that the witness of the Spirit accompanied both these events. But it is certainly remarkable, and it tends to support the interpretation of the miracle above given, that the same writer, who in his epistle uses the phrase three witnesses, and who dwells upon it as pregnant with mysterious truth, should be the only one of the Evangelists also who records in his Gospel the things which I have regarded as typical upon

each occasion. Shortly after the actual administration of the rite of baptism the symbol of his blood was exhibited, and when that blood was actually shed, the symbol of the other sacrament accompanied the effusion.

There is another very remarkable point which seems strongly to favour this interpretation. St. John's Gospel is well known to have been written as supplementary to the three other Gospels, and to have appeared at a much later period; and his chief object in writing it (as well as in writing that first epistle, which is a kind of commentary upon his Gospel), is acknowledged to be the assertion of that fundamental article of our faith which was then denied by many heretics, the atonement made for the sins of men by the sacrifice of an incarnate God. It is worthy of particular attention, therefore, as well in what it *omits*, as in what it contains peculiar to itself. Now it omits altogether the institution of the two sacraments, which are both so explicitly recorded by the other Evangelists. They were rites by that time universally received and established in the Church; their history was well known, and their authority was not questioned. But their high and sacred nature it is probable was by many not rightly understood, and those facts, therefore, in our Lord's life which have an intimate connection with that awful mystery, St. John most carefully preserved. These he has described with an energy and fervour proportionate to their high importance in the scheme of redemption, while his own concluding words imply that he had omitted to speak of many other miracles, because he would confine himself chiefly to those which established the main doctrine: 'And many other signs (or miracles) truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.' (*John* xx. 30, 31.)

Upon the whole, then, is it not reasonable to conclude, that the miracle which he alone has rescued from oblivion, which stands foremost in his narrative, which he has related in circumstantial detail, which he adverts to more than once in the sequel of his Gospel (*John* iv. 46–54), which yet, taken by itself, is destitute of that striking character of mercy and goodness so conspicuous in the rest, and which, in its literal signification, expresses little more than an exertion of supernatural power,—is it not, I say, reasonable to conclude that the Evangelist saw in it a sublime application? And that at this marriage feast of Cana, there stood a bridegroom among them whom they thought not of, and who by this silent act of power signified the mystical union then just commencing, and shortly to be accomplished, between Himself and the Church He was about to purchase with his blood?

To Him, the Lamb of God, who, having finished his work of redemption, now reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, to Him be glory, and thanksgiving, and blessing, and honour, and praise, in the Church, for ever and ever.

SERMON XII.

CURIOSITY DISCOURAGED.

JOHN xxi. 22.

'Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.'

THE particulars of an interview which our Saviour vouchsafed some of his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias, after He rose from the dead, are related in St. John's Gospel only. It was his third appearance to them after his resurrection, and it is remarkable upon many accounts. One of its principal objects seems to have been to prove the sincerity of Peter's attachment to his Master, whom he had deserted and denied during the last moments of his sufferings upon earth. Our Saviour, with evident allusion to the wavering conduct he then displayed (and with no design of delegating a paramount authority to this Apostle, as the Papists vainly pretend), questions him concerning the sincerity of his faith and love; and that in such an earnest and peremptory manner, as to draw from him expressions of uneasiness at the suspicions he had caused. 'Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.'*

He had not, however, long restored himself to the confidence of our Lord, by the fervour and simplicity of this

* See *Lectures on the Apostles*, L. ii. iii. iv.

declaration, before the natural impetuosity of his temper betrays him into another indiscretion, for which he is instantly though mildly reproved. Not content with meditating upon the holy office to which he had just been called, and on the part which it had just been revealed to him he was himself to act hereafter in the christian Church, he inquires also what shall be the lot of his fellow-disciple, the Evangelist St. John, who seems to have been a silent spectator of this affecting scene. 'Lord, and what shall this man do?'

However innocent a question of this sort may seem to us to be, yet the instant check which is given by our Lord to Peter's curiosity, deserves to be attentively considered, and is itself a proof of the displeasure with which that question was received. To us it is an undeniable proof, for although some of the disciples understood this saying as a prophecy concerning St. John, that he should never die, yet St. John himself by no means favours that construction; and we, who have lived after him, have no other way of accounting for it, than by interpreting it as a reproof of vain and unprofitable curiosity in heavenly things.

Is it, then, it may be asked, meant to forbid all those rational inquiries into the ways of Providence, which form the speculations of many good and pious men? Is it meant to condemn that affectionate interest we naturally feel in the fortunes of those around us, their future welfare in this world and their final destiny in another? Are we to be reduced to a state of cold and selfish indifference, each bent upon his own happiness, without bestowing a thought upon his neighbour? And are we not to extend our concern to our fellow-creatures, without incurring the imputation of sin and of disregard for the voice of Scripture?

Before we attempt an answer to such inquiries, let us be careful to mark the precise occasion of this refusal to satisfy Peter's question. He had just been invested with a solemn and awful charge, one which might afford matter for all his

thoughts and anxieties, and the concluding injunction of our blessed Lord, 'Follow thou me,' seems to indicate that his meaning was not merely to correct the presumption of inquiring into the hidden things of God, but to confirm his former solemn injunction, and to imply that such a curiosity commonly proceeds from insufficient attention to our own duties, and to the state of our own souls.

The nature of the duty, indeed, which had been committed to Peter, and which is the original authority for all succeeding commissions of the same kind, is a plain proof that we are not allowed to be careless of the salvation of others. Its very essence and sole business consisted in watching over the spiritual welfare of his brethren, in keeping them from wandering, in supplying them with wholesome advice and consolation, and in bringing them on steadily and carefully in the only way that leads to heaven. He was to be a guardian and a shepherd of that flock for whose sake Christ had recently laid down his life. And if his love was really more ardent and devoted than that of the other disciples, as we may fairly conclude it was by the general tenor of his conduct, and by the bitter repentance which followed one act of falsehood and denial, his Lord bids him now *prove that love*—not by vehemence and boldness, as he had often done before during his personal presence with them, but in the only way which would be open to him after that presence should be withdrawn, by affectionate care of all those who might be brought to believe in his name.

As some extenuation, however, and excuse for the fault which is here reproved, you will bear in mind that the full purpose of our Lord's intercourse with his Apostles was not yet accomplished. The visible economy of the Gospel was not yet closed. The forty days were not expired during which He vouchsafed to them frequent preternatural appearances, and conversed with them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. In the nature of that kingdom,

then, at this third appearance of our Lord after his resurrection, they were not yet perfectly instructed, and they still continued to cherish the fond national hopes of temporal deliverance and earthly prosperity, which were among the last errors that were banished from their minds.

Thus, in the latest interview, immediately before his ascension from the Mount of Olives, they asked of Him, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' The answer, though tending to correct their error, still does not satisfy their curiosity. It teaches them to curb their impatience, and to wait for the gradual unfolding of that dispensation of mercy, which He had purchased for mankind. 'It is not for you,' He says, 'to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.' And in a manner strictly according with the tenor of this reply to Peter, He there also proceeds to admonish them of their own duty, and of the part which it was destined for them to act, as what ought chiefly to occupy their minds. For He goes on to say, 'Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.' (*Acts* i. 8.) It is remarkable, also, in the course of our Lord's early ministry, that no opportunity seems to have been lost of inculcating the same lesson. Thus, in answer to the natural inquiry made by his disciples, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' He bids them confine their curiosity and inquisitive thoughts to what more immediately concerns themselves. 'Strive,' says He, 'to enter in at the strait gate;' make that the chief business of your lives. It will be more than enough for all your vigilance and all your resolution. Boast not yourselves against those that seem to be in the wrong track, much less be weary and faint in your own minds, because of the thousands whom you see around you careless of their danger, impatient of advice, disobedient to authority, and following the broad path of vice and pleasure, which leads away from heaven.

Think not that they have a better or a fairer lot than you. Neither perplex yourselves with fruitless speculations as to the ultimate purpose of God's providence, nor as to the countless multitudes of those beings who seem, as it were, born for destruction;—all such scruples and perplexities *come of evil.* They cannot in the slightest degree benefit either yourselves, or those about whose fate you are solicitous; but, on the contrary, they may interfere materially with your own salvation. Be thankful, then, that you are taught the good and the right way. Keep yourselves steadily and constantly in that way, and trust to the wisdom and goodness of your heavenly Father, that He will, in his own good time, bring forward all to the kingdom of his Son, whom He shall think deserving of so high a privilege.

Such is the free commentary I would pass upon the authoritative answer of our Lord to that question of his disciples; and I would deduce some important cautions applicable to errors at all times prevalent in the Church, and some of which seem to be revived with peculiar force in the present day.

It has been already observed that no better occasion could be chosen for checking curiosity on these subjects, than the very discourse which our Lord had just held with Peter, the main object of which was to excite his active love, and care, and sympathy for all who could be persuaded to become Christ's disciples. When, therefore, in the same discourse he is checked in the indulgence of a desire to penetrate futurity, we may be sure it was not designed to breed a heartless indifference to others, or an exclusive and selfish anxiety for our own welfare. After this instructive lesson, we may safely conclude that it is perfectly consistent with the utmost zeal for the cause of the Gospel, to confess our entire ignorance of the future destinies of our fellow-creatures, and to avoid all surmises or speculations on this subject.

And yet, how many pious Christians of the present day suffer their thoughts to wander over this dark and forbidden ground! How many are there who permit their minds to be disturbed by a consideration of the small portion of the human race to whom the Gospel has hitherto been made known—of the millions who drop into the grave from age to age, without having heard the word of salvation, or even the name of their Saviour!

To others, again, it affords matter of perplexity and wonder that so many, even in a christian country, should stop their ears against the word of life, or should despise the invitation, or disbelieve the word, or corrupt the doctrine; that so many should live as if the Gospel made not the slightest impression upon their minds, even when they are continually hearing it; and that the progress of Christianity should still be so slow, and feeble, and unsuccessful throughout the heathen world.

Now, the first answer that we might make to all such difficulties is, that everything here complained of is just what we might have expected, since it corresponds in character both with the commencement of the gospel dispensation, and with the earlier revelations of God to mankind. In the patriarchal times, true religion was as a faint light shining in a dark place. Among the Jews, it was often well nigh extinguished by the vices, the idolatries, and the gross carnal affections of that people. And even when our blessed Saviour, with the powers of heaven at his command, came to fulfil his Father's will, how slowly, and laboriously, and painfully did He establish that infant Church, which, beginning at Jerusalem, has now been for near 2000 years striving to extend its limits, and struggling often even to maintain its existence against spiritual as well as worldly enemies.

Reflections such as these ought to dissipate at once the uneasy thoughts which often are apt to spring up in the

mind from the objections to which I have alluded. They are objections which belong to the nature and history of all true religion, and to all that we know concerning God's dealings with mankind from the beginning of time. *Why* the remedy is thus partial and gradual, and in a thousand cases apparently ineffectual, we can no more explain than we can why the evil thus remedied should ever have been introduced at all. But we may learn from this consideration not to be impatient at the present imperfect condition of the christian Church; not to doubt the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, because his divine influence is often successfully resisted and counteracted by the wickedness of men; not to doubt the truth of God's promises or the wisdom of his measures, because we cannot account for what we see, or reconcile it with our notions of almighty power and unbounded goodness.

For, be it remembered, that, in the midst of all this apparent confusion and uncertainty, nothing can be clearer or more certain than *our own duty*. 'Follow thou me' is a precept still sounding in our ears, a precept as applicable to us as to the Apostle to whom it was delivered by his divine Master; and it is a full and sufficient answer to all the reasonings which the wit of man has ever devised to perplex and mislead the simple and unstable members of Christ's Church, to shake their faith.

But it is not only by unprofitable speculations on the actual state of religion among men that the faith of weak brethren is liable to be disturbed; there is often an eager desire manifested, even among the most zealous and learned persons, to anticipate the designs of Providence—to read the fate of empires before the time—to interpret passing events as the fulfilment of some scheme of prophecy of which their imagination is full—and to kindle hopes and expectations of some visible manifestation of God's interference, beyond what the ordinary course of human affairs exhibits.

Many are the fanciful schemes of interpretation which rise and fall in every age. A few years pass by, and the event no longer answers to the prophecy. Another explanation is offered; and this, also, soon follows the fate of the rest. Like figures traced on the sand by the sea-shore, the tide of human affairs washes them out, and prepares the surface for another set of interpretations, equally short-lived with the former.

That the fortunes of the christian Church have been shadowed out in the Book of Revelation, is most certain; but *that* prophetic vision is not designed to gratify the curiosity of each succeeding age about things to come, but to confirm their faith by the evidence of what is past. Even of this the full understanding is probably reserved for some more advanced stage of our being, while enough is made known to convince us that the corruptions and abuses which have polluted the Church are owing to the influence still exerted in the world by the enemy of our salvation; and they should lead us heartily to pray for that consummation of our Lord's triumph over sin and Satan, which will one day close the mysterious dispensation of the Gospel.

In the visions of St. John, who lived not indeed to witness the literal second coming of our Lord, but who was permitted to see, through the veil of allegory, much that would happen before that second coming, we trace with confidence some of the most prominent circumstances of the actual history of the Church. The wickedness and impiety of Rome, which is one of the powers of Antichrist, and the persecutions of primitive and simple Christianity by that domineering Church, whose earthly power is indeed now broken, and, as we may confidently hope, can never again prevail,—these are among the most clearly-defined objects in the Book of Revelation. The *destruction* of that unholy, usurping power, 'by whose sorceries all nations were deceived' (*Rev.* xviii. 23), is there also denounced in language and by images, the in-

terpretation of which cannot be doubted by any who are free from the influence of her strong delusions.

Whoever examines the history of former times by the light of these prophecies will, indeed, find abundant matter to confirm his faith in their inspiration; but, on the other hand, the events themselves, as they are unfolded to our experience by the gradual hand of time, are so different in outward form and character from the mystical images employed to denote them, and they extend through such a long succession of ages, as to incline any calm and unprejudiced mind to believe that the prophecies were designedly to prove the superintendence of providence *after* the things had come to pass. And as our Saviour said to his disciples, 'Behold, I have told you this before it come to pass; that when it is come to pass ye may believe,' so, much of what is recorded in this part of Scripture will never be thoroughly understood until some time after the prophecy shall have been actually accomplished.

Of the same kind are the fond expectations certain Christians have entertained of our Saviour's coming to reign with the saints for a thousand years upon the earth; of the restoration of the Jews once more to the land of their forefathers; and many other notions, which, whether true or false, have no connection with our own duty or our own happiness, but rather lead us astray from following Christ, in the proper meaning of that phrase, into regions of romance and imagination.

In opposition to all such unprofitable inquiries it will be well to bear continually in mind the great object and business of our calling in Christ Jesus, and seriously to ask ourselves, Have we so far obeyed this call as to possess leisure for that which does not immediately concern us, nor promote the welfare of our own souls?

'Follow thou me' is a precept which no one can mistake who reads, or who listens to the preaching, of God's word.

It can bewilder the thoughts of no man who is intent upon obeying his Lord's will, rather than upon indulging his own curiosity. He need not seek for that purpose to lift the veil of futurity, or to study the meaning of prophecies not yet accomplished. The law of his God is 'nigh unto him, even at his door.' It may be made 'a light unto his feet, and a lantern to his paths.' Whatever be his station in life, whatever his employment, the example of his Saviour is set before him as a pattern; the help of his Saviour is always at hand, if he humbly and heartily prays for it; the promise of his Saviour is ever present to cheer his drooping spirits, to animate his hopes, and to sustain his resolution.

Only let him be careful not to catch at hope without faith, not to pretend faith without obedience. Then, indeed, may he dismiss from his mind all anxiety concerning what is to happen in this age or in future ages of the world. Everything which belongs to his soul's health may be read in characters of light throughout the Sacred Volume. 'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation' (to use the solemn and affecting language of St. Paul,) '*hath appeared to all men*,* teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour' (our great God and Saviour) 'Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' (*Tit.* ii. 11–14.)

He himself is gone, as He told his disciples, among his last words of comfort, He would go, to 'prepare a place for them in his Father's house.' They saw the fulfilment of this promise actually begun; they saw Him ascend to his

* The exact rendering of the original, doubtless, is, 'The grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared.'—Ed.

Father and their Father, to his God and their God. To his first martyr, St. Stephen, He afterwards revealed Himself in the glory which He had from the beginning of the world; and from that seat of glory He will assuredly one day come in the sight of all men; in the sight of them that hated Him and slew Him, as well as of those that love his appearing. And then shall the humble follower of his Lord, who with faith and well-doing here on earth hath patiently waited for his coming—who hath not permitted hunger, or thirst, or cold, or nakedness, or any earthly thing, to 'separate him from the love of Christ' and of God—then shall he perceive how all things have worked together for the good of his faithful disciples, and how his very troubles have tended to secure his happiness and to heighten his reward.

Now to the only true God, the Creator, the Redeemer, the Sanctifier of mankind, three persons in one ever-blessed Godhead, be all honour, and glory, and praise, and thanksgiving, now, henceforth, and for ever.

SERMON XIII.

THE SIN OF THE PROPHET OF JUDAH.

1 Kings xiii. 21, 22.

'And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.'

SUCH is the solemn denunciation of God's displeasure at a direct and wilful disobedience of his command, in a matter which may appear to many readers to be in its own nature trivial and unimportant. It may seem, upon a cursory view of the passage, that the punishment which followed this act of disobedience was out of all measure severe; and that the fraud which was practised by the man of God to seduce his brother from his duty was so artful, that even a faithful and zealous servant might have been deceived, without doing any violence to his own conscience. Other difficulties may arise, even in a pious and honest mind, respecting the nature and importance of his mission, and the apparent unfairness of permitting the prophet to escape without punishment, who was the author of the offence, while he who was the dupe of his imposture suffered under the immediate visitation of divine vengeance.

With a view to remove or to lessen these difficulties, and

to point out some particulars in the transaction which may afford matter of instruction and admonition to ourselves, I will first briefly lay before you a summary of the whole case as it stands recorded in the sacred history.

Upon the death of Solomon, we are told that the people demanded some relaxation of tribute from his son Rehoboam, and upon his refusal, and tyrannical answer to their petition, ten of the tribes went into open rebellion, and made Jeroboam their king—a man who had been one of Solomon's captains, and who had been expressly ordained for this purpose by the hand of the prophet Ahijah, even in Solomon's lifetime, as a punishment for the idolatries which disgraced the latter part of that king's reign. After this separation, the tribes of Benjamin and Judah (to whom Jerusalem belonged) alone remained subject to the line of David.

As soon, therefore, as Jeroboam had established and settled his new kingdom, he thought it impolitic to permit his subjects to go up to Jerusalem to worship, imagining that this practice would weaken their allegiance to *him*, and in time draw them back to their former connection and dependence upon Judah. 'Whereupon he took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.'*

Religion was thus made an engine of state policy, and that, not in matters of discipline and ceremony merely, but *idolatry* itself, the greatest of all abominations in the sight of God; that very sin which the whole frame and constitution of the law of Moses was designed to counteract, was now openly introduced and established by the king's au-

* Bethel, 'House of God,' was a spot to which some degree of religious veneration had long been attached. (*Gen.* xxviii.) And Dan had long been a seat of irregular and idolatrous worship. (*Judges* xviii.) Hence, doubtless, besides their local convenience, these spots were fixed on for the placing of the idols.—Ed.

thority. The fact is recorded in a few simple terms; but in order to form a just conception of it, we must regard it as a great change in the whole religious system of the country, extending through all conditions, both of public and private life.

Accordingly, we find that the new idolatry was generally followed, sanctioned as it was by the command and example of the king. Compliance with this innovation was the only road to favour and promotion. The people followed their wealthy and powerful neighbours, as *they* accommodated themselves to the will of their sovereign. Just as, it is to be feared, many would now do, if Popery were again to be encouraged in this kingdom, and to be patronised by the State.

Neither must we suppose that the change thus briefly told was abrupt and sudden, or that there were not many subtle and plausible approaches devised to prepare the people's minds for it. They were, you may be sure, trained to the reception of the new forms about to be introduced. The law of Moses was not to be abrogated. The substance of their religion they were persuaded was to be still the same, or rather they were taught that the new form was the original one, lost through lapse of time, and now to be restored. 'These be thy gods, O Israel,' said the innovator, 'which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.' Whereas the written word of God, if they had been careful to read and understand it, plainly told them, that it was the grossest departure from the true faith, the very abomination against which the history of this nation, and the language of their law testified most loudly.

It is almost inconceivable, how, while the law of Moses still remained the professed religion of the people of Israel, this monstrous corruption could ever have been engrafted upon it; but the heart of man is deceitful and deceivable above all things. Look well, my brethren of the common faith, look well to your own times, lest a similar perversion

of the truth be not favoured and encouraged amongst us, until by little and little it grow up to a heresy destructive again of the true faith, destructive of all the gospel simplicity, for the recovery of which our forefathers laid down their lives, and lest the sorceries of Rome again bewitch the land, and pollute the sanctuary of the Redeemer.

After the wicked change had been established by Jeroboam, the vital principle of the law of Moses was destroyed; and when Ahab had brought in the additional worship of Baal, few were there throughout the land who remained faithful to the Lord. And this first unrighteous prince (Jeroboam), to mark the extent as well as enormity of his crime, is, on that account, for ages after, emphatically denominated in Scripture, 'he that made Israel to sin.'

Thus much may serve to show the *importance* of the occasion on which this act of divine judgment was performed.

It was not long after the introduction of this system that one of the prophets of Judah, whose name is not preserved, received a divine commission to proceed from Jerusalem to Bethel, where Jeroboam kept his court, and to proclaim in the most public and solemn manner God's curse against his impiety. His commission he executed with fidelity and courage. On the day of the feast which Jeroboam had instituted in imitation of the great anniversary of the Jews at Jerusalem, called the Feast of Tabernacles, while the king was standing by the altar, and himself burning incense upon it, he declared without fear all that God had told him—that the altar should be polluted by having the bones of its own priests burnt upon it. It pleased God to confirm his word by two signs or miracles, which were immediately performed. First, the altar was preternaturally rent at his bidding, and the ashes poured out; and secondly, when the king's arm, upon attempting to seize him, was withered, the prophet healed it, at his entreaty, in a moment of time.

Then follow the particulars which are so familiar to us all, as being related in one of the Sunday lessons of the year. He resolutely refused the king's invitation to stay and refresh himself, and having performed part of his journey home, was on the eve of accomplishing the whole of his mission with the most exact fidelity, when, in an evil hour, he yielded to the infirmity of nature, aided by deceit, and turned back with the old prophet, to eat bread and to drink water, that is, according to the eastern style which prevails to the present day, to accept the invitation given him to the prophet's table, contrary to the express command of God.

The first question which arises out of this review regards the nature of the prohibition itself, so strict and peremptory on a point apparently of so much indifference. But here we must in the very outset protest against that presumptuous examination of God's word, which demands a reason to be given for all his dispensations; which refuses to be satisfied with the fact, that the thing is revealed, or is commanded, and requires some explanation of the proceeding adapted to our weak and limited capacities.

It is easy to imagine that a command may be given by God, merely to try the obedience of his servants; and this trial is so much the more conclusive and satisfactory, if the servant had no other motive to determine his conduct than implicit devotion to his Lord's will; if the duty, considered in itself, appeared unreasonable or unaccountable to his own understanding, and one which derived all its obligation from the authority of him who imposed it. 'Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the vessel say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?'

Examples of this species of trial are frequent in the Holy Scriptures. It will be sufficient to mention that of our first parents, in the case of the forbidden fruit; and that equally signal instance of the patriarch Abraham, who was commanded to sacrifice his only son, and who, in the full assur-

ance that God could not bid him do wrong, proceeded without hesitation to perform an act, not only unaccountable, humanly speaking, but even to the last degree dreadful. And surely the slightest reflection upon our own weakness and dependence as creatures of God's will, must convince us that in a case of positive duty the only inquiry ought to be, '*Does* God command this?' not, '*Why* does He command it?' or, 'How can He command a thing the reason of which I do not perceive?'

Hence, therefore, we may learn the folly and danger of submitting the revealed will of God to our own judgments of what is rational or probable; rejecting some parts and explaining away others (such as the doctrine of the Trinity, of the Atonement, of the agency of evil spirits), because we cannot reconcile them to our own notions and prepossessions, and to those previous opinions men have commonly formed of the nature of God's government, and the perfection of his attributes.

This bold and arrogant method of interpreting Scripture, in opposition to its express language, bears a strong resemblance to the sin of the prophet of Judah, bending the clearest precepts to a conformity with present humours and inclinations, even when they cannot plead, as he might, the temptation of distress, and the pressure of human wants, as an excuse for their disobedience.

Many, doubtless, there are, who, like him, are drawn into this error by the persuasions of false teachers, co-operating with their own disposition, and confirming them in that which they secretly covet and prefer. And although I would by no means impute to such teachers any malicious design to entrap or mislead the ignorant, though I would be far from charging them with deliberate fraud and invention of what they know to be false, yet in this respect at least the comparison holds good, and its warning is most useful; that if God spared not him who was deceived by the falsehood of

the prophet, artfully contrived and incapable of detection, when he departed from God's word, manifestly and directly revealed, how can *they* expect to escape, who forsake the plain path of Scripture, and corrupt the most important truths of religion, in compliance with teachers who have no pretensions to inspiration, but who speak from the natural unassisted judgments, and often from the wild imaginations of their own minds?

Nothing which has been here advanced will, I trust, be understood as if it were meant to condemn all study of the ways and works of providence; all endeavours to demonstrate their wisdom and goodness, or to point out those considerations which may satisfy the doubts of a pious inquirer by reconciling God's dealings to human reason. On the contrary, it is an employment as innocent and laudable as it is delightful, to search out the wisdom of the Most High, whether exemplified in the works of the natural world, or in the revelation He has given of Himself to mankind. And there is not a more worthy or a more noble exercise of the faculties He has given us, than to remove the scruples and clear up the difficulties of weak minds; to suggest probable grounds for that, which to them seems strange and 'hard to be understood,' and to vindicate his counsels from the objections and cavils of unbelievers. It is only when we presume to set up our judgments in opposition to his manifest revelation, when we venture to pronounce, 'this cannot be the will of God, because it is not agreeable to the reason of Man,' that the offence begins; the same offence which made the Jews and Greeks of old reject the preaching of the Cross, to the one an offence, to the other foolishness, and which still operates more or less in all minds who are not prepared to submit every high thought, and every conceit and imagination of their own to the obedience of Christ.

Some people object, that to consider whether a thing be *worthy of God*, is one way we have of determining whether

it *came from God;* and therefore contend, that it is no defiance of his authority to do this, but a prudent and honest endeavour to ascertain his will, and even a mark of jealousy for his honour. The objection is plausible but not sound. If indeed the point in question be one of doubtful authority —one where the evidence is insufficient, or the language ambiguous, we not only *may,* but in such a case we *ought* to consult every other method within our reach, of discovering from what source it came, and what is its legitimate force and meaning. Thus the doctrine of *absolute decrees of reprobation,* which some Christians hold, may well be opposed on that ground, that it is inconsistent with our notions of the goodness of God, because the passages of Scripture on which it rests are very capable of a different interpretation; and, moreover, cannot, in that sense, be reconciled with a multitude of other passages perfectly clear and decisive the other way. But when the meaning of a precept is undisputed, and so much proof is given that it proceeds from God as would be sufficient to satisfy our minds if we had no objection to allege against the thing itself, it is then an unwarrantable presumption in a *creature* to reject it, because it does not coincide with his opinion of what his Creator would have done or ordered. Nothing could, in the opinion of the Apostles themselves, be more unworthy of God, than the painful and ignominious death of Jesus Christ; but the miracle of his resurrection overcame every scruple; and we, in this age, have united the authority of all the miracles which were ever employed with all the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, to convince them severally that their mission was from God; so that no room remains for the use of this argument, except where the language of Scripture is doubtful, and admits of various interpretations.

But if we return to the case of the prophet, which gave rise to these reflections, we shall find that not the slightest ground existed for doubting of the divine authority under

which he was then acting. The finger of God had been manifested in a most striking and preternatural act of power; and, according to his own statement, the same God who bade him rebuke the idolatrous king, and denounce vengeance against his altar, bade him also return without eating bread or drinking water there. Of this he had the fullest assurance which man could have or desire to have. In *him* there could be no pretence of a candid and sincere inquiry after truth; of judgment perplexed and misled by the apparent weight of evidence. The evidence to which he yielded was confessedly weaker than that which appeared on the other side. He knew to a certainty that God had commanded him not to eat; but another only told him that God had revoked this command: 'I am a prophet as thou art, and an angel spake to me, saying, Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat bread and drink water.' (1 *Kings* xiii. 18.) But he gave no sign of power, like the sign of the altar rent, or of the king's arm healed, to convince him that he spoke from the same authority. And the example remains a standing lesson to us of human frailty—a proof how weak and imperfect all our resolutions are, unless aided and supported by Him, who knows our infirmities, and who, if sincerely and from our hearts we ask his aid, is both willing and able, out of weakness to make us strong.

The peculiar circumstances, too, under which the prophet's resolution failed him are well deserving our attention, as containing an instructive warning for the regulation of a Christian's life. It was not in the crisis of his arduous duty when its difficulties and dangers lay full in the way before him, that his constancy was shaken. He had braved the anger of a king, surrounded by all his court, in the midst of his own capital, and when performing an act on which the whole policy of his reign was founded. Nay, more than this. He had resisted the friendly entreaties of that king, and rejected his

offers of favour and kindness. He had executed punctually and to the letter all his commission, and a few hours would have put him out of the reach of danger. To what temptation then did his virtue yield? To that by which in the course of human life every one of us is liable to be tried—to the artful insidious approaches of false advisers, to the seductions of apparent friendship, conspiring with the calls of inclination and appetite.

It is not in the hour of persecution, and of open peril only, that the fortitude of a christian soldier is tried. Nay, in such an hour it has even been observed that a spirit of reaction is often created in weak and timid natures, that they have assumed a constancy and vigour never before possessed, and have met the terrors to which they were exposed with a corresponding energy. It is in the familiar and unsuspecting intercourse of life, when there is nothing striking or uncommon to put men on their guard, and remind them of their duty, that the principle of obedience is most endangered. The heart, we know, is deceitful above all things. It is seldom unable to invent excuses and arguments sufficient to break down the barriers between inclination and duty, and to make that seem lawful which men feel to be desirable.

If, in such a moment the solicitations of hollow friends and companions unite to flatter and foment their own desires, holding out specious arguments for loosening the restraints of religion, and suggesting distinctions, artful reasons, and palliations, to quiet the scruples of a conscience already disarmed, and almost asleep, the victory of sin is completed, and the sinner wilfully shuts his eyes against the light that was in him.

Many and various are the arts by which in a refined age the guilt of sin is varnished over, by courtly phrases, by an air of delicacy and kindness, by cheerful and gay behaviour, sometimes even, as in the case of the lying prophet, by the

more imposing artifice of apparent sanctity and religion. But in all such cases, however plausible and ingenious the discourse may be, which would seduce us from our known duty, and explain away the import of God's laws, the answer is short and ready—I will pursue the safe and plain road, 'To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' God's law has been delivered under circumstances which make it impossible that I should be deceived; and of this law an Apostle has said, 'Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.'

If, after the view which has been given of this transaction, it should still be required to assign some cause for a prohibition so singular, there is none more probable than that God chose to make manifest his extreme abhorrence of the sin which then infected the whole country, by forbidding his servant to accept any hospitality there, or to hold any communion with a people so polluted. And the refusal was calculated to make a deep impression, following close as it did upon the declaration of God's judgment, and the stupendous display of his Almighty Power.

That it was a transaction every way worthy of being stamped with peculiar characters, I have already observed, both on account of the extensive influence of Jeroboam's idolatry through Israel, and of its long duration after his reign; for, notwithstanding this awful miracle, nearly all the kings who succeeded Jeroboam adopted the same policy, to keep their subjects from going up to Jerusalem to worship. And it was after an interval of full 300 years that king Josiah, of whose zeal for true religion we read in 2 *Kings* xxiii., and who had been specially foretold by name, on this very occasion fulfilled the words of the prophet in their literal meaning, by destroying the altar in Samaria, and causing men's bones to be burnt upon it.

There is, then, only one particular more which we remarked as likely to raise a difficulty in the mind of a pious reader, namely, the punishment falling on the head, not of the deceiver, but of him who was the victim of his deceit.

Upon this point, especially after the observations already made on the folly of measuring God's dispensations by our own reason, it will not be necessary to say much. I will only premise that the punishment was evidently, by its miraculous character, more designed for the purpose of making an impression on beholders, than of awarding strict retribution to the parties concerned. Viewed in this respect, it appears as the consummation and close of the whole supernatural agency then employed for reclaiming the idolatrous people of Israel. 'Men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way; the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass: and they told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.' Thus, both the fact, and the cause of it, became known at once. For the old prophet, upon hearing the news, exclaimed that he was slain for his disobedience, and he honoured his memory with a solemn funeral.

Again, although the person deceived was slain, and the deceiver permitted to live, let us beware how we hastily estimate the degree of punishment by that consideration. On such a subject, indeed, it becomes us always to speak with diffidence and humility. But it must be evident to every reflecting mind, that it *may be* a blessing to an individual to have his life shortened, as it may be the bitterest of all curses to have it prolonged. It is, at best, therefore, unbecoming and rash in us to pronounce with any confidence what is mercy, and what severity, in such cases. And in the case more immediately before us, there is enough to show, that if the deceased was punished for *his* transgression, the survivor had no cause to rejoice in *his* own impunity. Who is there, with a mind ever so little cultivated

and informed, that would not think an early death preferable to the protraction of life under the agonies of remorse and self-reproach; under the consciousness of having been the guilty author of another's ruin; of having seduced innocence and corrupted integrity beneath the mask of friendship, and through the abuse of God's sacred name?

The old prophet, as we learn from the same history, was not a man hardened in disposition, or incapable of those feelings which affect the happiness of man far more powerfully than any bodily pain, or any event that can occur without us. The sorrow which he expressed for the victim of his deceit, and we may presume also the anguish of heart which is the natural concomitant of such a recollection, were doubtless a full equivalent for his share of the iniquity; and he contributed, perhaps, by the course and conversation of his remaining days, to keep alive among his countrymen those few sparks of the true religion, which were not wholly extinguished in the time of Josiah. When mourning over the corpse of his lost brother, his injunction to his sons was, 'Lay my bones beside his bones;' and we know, from the history of Josiah's great work of reformation of the religion both of Judea and Samaria (2 *Kings* xxiii.), that the lapse of 300 years had not effaced in the minds of the inhabitants the memory of the spot where they lay, and of the tragical event which caused his burial in their city.

But in speculating on the ends and motives of God's ways, our principal care must be, as was before observed, to submit our own thoughts and judgments entirely to his revealed word; pleased and thankful if we can discover a solution to our doubts, but always ready to acknowledge that, from the very nature of our being, it is impossible we can now see more than a part of that wonderful scheme which will one day be presented to the view of those who

have patiently waited for the kingdom of his Son, and whose happiness will then consist in *knowing* and *enjoying* that which in the present life is the trial and exercise of their *faith* in Christ.

To Him, the Author and finisher of our faith, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be given all honour, and worship, and thanks, and praise, world without end.

LECTURES.

THE two following are the concluding Lectures (being the 10th and 11th) of a Series called the 'Bosworth Lectures' (from the name of the Founder of the Lectureship), at Oriel College. When I was appointed Lecturer, Dr. Copleston being then Provost, I applied to him for assistance, which he afforded me by revising those that I wrote myself, and writing some for me; among which latter were the following.

The reader will understand, that these Lectures, being expressly designed for undergraduates, were, of course, of an elementary and popular character.

The rest of those written by him, though excellently adapted for their purpose, contain little or nothing but what is to be found in several well-known books, except one passage relating to the Church's testimony to the Scriptures, extracted in the Essays on the *Kingdom of Christ*, and reprinted in a former part of this volume.

LECTURE I.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

HAVING established the principal articles of belief which the christian Church has uniformly, maintained in opposition to heretical opinions, it seems fit to inquire what the nature of that Church is which has been the depositary and guardian of the true doctrine, and how far its authority extends in regulating the faith and practice of its members.

For as, on the one hand, we contend that our religion was not set adrift in the world to be preached or explained according to the will and fancy of individuals, so, on the other, we maintain that there exists no human authority warranted to impose upon us its own dictates in religious matters, as entitled to implicit obedience.

Now, that from the first promulgation of the Gospel there has been a distinctly and permanently-embodied society, established by our Lord himself, beginning with the Apostles and his first disciples, and spreading gradually wider and wider, as the Gospel was propagated among mankind, is evident from the earliest ecclesiastical historians; and this society it is that we denominate the CHURCH.

The purposes for which our blessed Lord instituted this society appear to have been principally these two:—1st, the preservation and dissemination of his doctrines in their original purity; and 2ndly, the maintenance of peace and good order among believers.

Hence it must evidently be a *visible* society. It might, indeed, appear superfluous to notice so obvious a circumstance, had not an attempt been made to limit the Church to the invisible society of those who have 'finished their course' upon earth, in the faith and fear of God; an attempt which would wrest from all ecclesiastical establishments their claim to divine authority. This extravagant notion is refuted by our Lord himself, who declares that the kingdom of heaven (by which is to be understood the christian Church) is like a 'certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants into the highways, who gathered together as many as they found, *both bad and good;* and the wedding was furnished with guests.'

Now, the description of a church, the members of which are 'both bad and good,' cannot be confined to those 'whose names are written in heaven.'

I have said, that by the kingdom of heaven is here to be understood the Church; that it is also used (as well as the equivalent expression, the kingdom of God) in some passages, in another sense to signify the society of 'just men made perfect' in the next world, has probably contributed to lead inattentive or uncandid readers into this confusion of thought, which has terminated in their denying the existence of the visible Church.

That this society was not only instituted by Christ, but further, that the mode of admission into it was prescribed by Him, and restrained according to his will, we collect from his answer to Nicodemus compared with his charge to his disciples. He said to the former, 'Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;' here He lays down the mode and condition of admittance into his Church; viz. to be 'born of water, and of the Spirit;' and that christian baptism was what He had in view as this mode and condition, is plain from his charge to his disciples, 'Go ye therefore, and teach all

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Now, as every society must be regulated by certain officers, Christ has placed officers over his Church—'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.'*—'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you;'† and that this commission is not to be limited to the eleven Apostles, the remarkable words which follow clearly prove, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'‡

Accordingly, in order to preserve that continuity of succession in the officers of the Church which is here implied, we find the Apostles taking care to appoint and ordain other ministers as Christ had ordained them, and transmitting to these a portion of the authority they had received from Him; being by this means themselves the first of a series which continues unbroken to this day. It is worth while to remark, that (as the judicious Leslie has observed)§

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* *Luke* xxii. 29. † *John* xx. 21. ‡ *Matt.* xxviii. 20.

§ The reader is to observe that the adoption of Leslie's argument does not at all imply an approbation of his notions respecting the *character* of the christian Priesthood. What Dr. Copleston's views were as to the doctrine of the sacramental character of Ordination, has been shown in a former part of this volume. But Leslie's argument for the historical truth of the gospel-narrative is quite distinct from, and independent of, all these questions. And a somewhat fuller statement of that argument, with a notice of this distinctness, I will take the liberty of here citing from a little book which expresses what were, to the best of my knowledge and belief, Dr. Copleston's views on the subject.

'It is to be observed, however, that although no *one individual christian Minister* can, with complete certainty, trace his own succession in an unbroken chain from the Apostles, and prove that there was no flaw in any link, the case is different when we look to *the Clergy* generally. For there can be no reasonable doubt that *such an Order of men* did always exist, from the times of the Apostles, continuously, to this day. We may be as sure of this as we are that great numbers of the English nation are descendants of the Saxons, who settled in Britain in the 5th and 6th centuries, though there is probably no one man who could trace his descent from any of them. For christian

this continuous succession of the christian priesthood,* furnishes an unanswerable argument on the side of our revelation, being a standing argument, as it were, of its divine origin. If any set of men, springing up in the present day, were falsely to profess themselves the regular successors in an unbroken series of some who had been

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Ministers held office in the Churches as immediate successors of others who held the same office, and who, in like manner, professed to be the immediate successors of others, &c., whose predecessors had been appointed by the Apostles themselves.

'Now if, a century ago, or ten centuries ago, or at any other time, a number of men had arisen, claiming to be the immediate successors (as above described) of persons holding this office, when, in fact, *no such Order of men had ever been heard of*, such a silly pretension would have been immediately exposed and derided.

'There must always, therefore, have existed such an Order of men, from the time of those Apostles who professed to be eye-witnesses of the Resurrection, and to work sensible public miracles in proof of their divine commission. And consequently the christian Ministry is a standing *monument* to attest the *public proclamation* of those miraculous events at the very time when they are said to have occurred.

'Now at that time there must have been great numbers of persons able and willing to expose the imposture, had there been any.

'And you are to observe that this argument for the truth of the Sacred History is quite independent of any particular *mode* of appointing christian Ministers. If, for instance, these had been always elected by the People, and had at once entered on their office without any ordination by other Ministers, still, if they were but appointed (in whatever mode) as immediate successors of persons holding the same office, the argument is the same.'—*Lessons on Religious Worship*, L. v. § 14, pp. 140, 141.

* The reader is to observe that 'Priesthood' and 'Priest' are used throughout this lecture in the general sense in which all ministers of religion of whatever kind are so termed; and, when applied to a *christian* Minister in the original and etymological sense of Elder,—Presbyteros; never, in the sense of a *sacrificing priest*,—Hiereus or Sacerdos, such as those of the Jews and of the Pagans. And, accordingly, the reader will find it applied, in a passage a little further on, to the mahometan Mollah, who is not a sacrificing priest.

Dr. Copleston's utter rejection of the notion of a sacerdotal priesthood on earth, under the gospel dispensation, has been fully set forth in the former part of this volume.

originally appointed by the author of certain miracles, to testify those miracles as eye-witnesses, and to preach the doctrines of their master; and were they to add, that these doctrines and these miracles had been constantly proclaimed by numbers of these preachers from the time of the first founder of the religion until now, who does not see that so impudent a falsehood would be instantly refuted by every one's experience?

Now, the very circumstances which render it impossible to gain credit for a feigned story of this nature now, would also have rendered it no less impossible to do so at any anterior period; the pretensions, therefore, of the christian priesthood, must be founded in fact, since we are thus compelled to trace it up to the very period when sensible miracles were professed to be wrought, which, if unreal, men's senses would have enabled them to detect and expose.

It seemed advisable to remark this great and most important distinction between the christian priesthood and that of pagan or mahometan nations, none of which furnish any evidence for their respective religions, since none of them even profess to trace their origin in an unbroken series up to the actual performance of visible miracles.

But to return—2ndly, the Church of Christ is a *spiritual* society; He has himself expressly told us, that his kingdom is not of this world; it was not set up in opposition to temporal sovereignties; it claimed empire only in the consciences of Christians, and did not in worldly affairs interfere with their submission to civil governors. The enemies to which it was opposed were sin, the world, and the devil, against which we promise, at our baptism, to fight manfully under the banner of Christ crucified.

The spirituality of Christ's kingdom is proved by his example no less than his words; He steadily resisted the attempts of the people to make Him a king, and refused to

interfere in the questions concerning the obedience of the Jews to the Roman government; and his Apostles in like manner inculcated the duty of obedience to the civil authorities under which they lived.

3rdly. The Church of Christ is an UNIVERSAL society; universal both with respect to *place* and *time*. The more solemn acts of Jewish worship were confined to Jerusalem; whereas, the disciples of Christ were commanded by their Master, to 'go out into all the world, and to preach the gospel to every creature;' for to the blessed Jesus God hath given 'the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession:' and hence we use the expression of the 'Holy Catholic Church' (or Church Universal) to indicate that it was our Lord's design to found *one* community of unlimited extent.

The word Church, however, is frequently applied in a narrower sense to every single branch of this great community; it is thus that St. Paul speaks of having the care of *all the churches;* we read elsewhere, also, of the first founded churches in Asia; and we find the same name continually applied to other such subordinate communities, all of which could distinctly trace their origin, mediately or immediately, from the first church at Jerusalem, from which they were off-shoots, and deduce a regular succession of pastors from the Apostles themselves. The christian Church is also an universal society with respect to *time*.

The Jewish economy, which was only the shadow of good things to come, but not the substance, was to cease. When Christ appeared, its work had been accomplished. Like the forerunner of the Messiah, the Mosaic dispensation sunk before the increase of the Gospel; the new law, which was to be 'written on man's heart' and to teach him the worship of God 'in spirit and in truth,' was to last for ever; and this the Jews themselves rightly understood, though they were mistaken as to the *nature* of Christ's kingdom;

they were therefore at a loss how to reconcile that saying of Jesus, that He should be 'taken from them,' with his being the Messiah—'We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?'

The christian Church, then, is not merely a number of people agreeing in the same articles of faith, or in the same acts of religious worship; but it is, moreover, a *society*, not of man's, but of Christ's, forming; a society of spiritual incorporation; of universal extent both as to time and place; of which Christ himself is the Head, and all individual Christians who have been regularly admitted to it, the members. Neither is it left to the choice of each individual whether he will maintain his connection with it or not. If he is a disciple of Christ he *must* be a member of Christ's Church, and, being such, he is bound to comply with those reasonable conditions, which are essential to the good order and preservation of the society. It has been already remarked that the Church, being a society, must be regulated by certain officers, and that Christ has appointed officers for this purpose. These governors of the christian community, besides their high commission to preach the Gospel, are required to enact such canons and laws in spiritual affairs as shall tend to edification; whereby it is not meant that they have authority to change any of the divine laws, or impose any article of faith, or rule of moral duty, or to prescribe any terms of salvation which are neither expressly contained in the Scriptures, nor can with certainty be inferred from them; but only, that they are invested with power in all such things as relate to the outward peace of the Church; and if it appears that things of this kind are left undetermined by the Scriptures, and further, that it is necessary they *should* be determined, then we cannot doubt but that Christ has entrusted the governors of the Church with authority to determine them.

Now, that these are *not* particularly determined by Scripture is very evident, for the rules of Scripture are all general; we are commanded to assemble together for the worship of God, but the times and places are not expressed. We are commanded to 'follow such things as make for peace and edification,' and to 'do all things decently and in order.' But the particular methods by which order must be maintained and edification promoted are nowhere stated. Still, it is necessary that these things *be* settled, to prevent disorder and confusion. And, accordingly, we shall find that the Apostles and primitive governors of the Church, besides the standing rules of the Gospel, established many regulations as the several occasions of the churches under their care required. In many of St. Paul's epistles, especially in those addressed to the Corinthians, he prescribes particular rules for the decency of divine worship, the avoiding of public scandal, and the administration of other things not determined by Christ. He speaks also of customs which he or other Apostles had appointed, and which the Church observed.

There is, and ever will be, the same necessity of instituting rules for the peace and government of the Church as existed in the apostolic age, and, consequently, there is good reason why *this* part of the apostolic authority should be transmitted to the rulers of the Church in all ages. And as one of the circumstances which constitutes the unity of the Catholic Church is the obligation which *all* its members lie under (whether they fulfil it or no), to trust in Christ as their Saviour and maintain the doctrines of Scripture, (these being of *universal* authority,) so, in matters of mere discipline (since *these* need not be necessarily everywhere the same), it seems but reasonable to allow authority as to such matters to the church existing in each place.

Where the authority of the governors is so clearly marked

out, the subjection of the members to that authority is necessarily implied. Where the divine law sanctions the former, it demands by immediate consequence the latter. But these dictates of reason are confirmed by the voice of inspiration: 'We beseech you, brethren,' says St. Paul, 'to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.' And, again, the same Apostle enjoins his christian brethren among the Israelites to 'obey them that have the rule over them, and to submit themselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.'

But if a power of *ordaining* rules for edification be conveyed by the divine decree to the governors of the Church, they must also be invested with authority to enforce the laws which they have deemed it expedient to enact, by judging and censuring offenders.

This authority they derive from their blessed Master, who declared to St. Peter (which declaration applied equally to all the Apostles, and, as we have already observed, applying to them in their *pastoral* character, descended to their successors in *that* department), that He would 'give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that whatsoever he should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he should loose on earth should be loosed in heaven.' And the same authority which was bestowed on them by Christ, we find conferred by St. Paul on Timothy, to whom he thus writes: 'Against an elder (πρεσβύτερον, a presbyter or minister) receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.' And to Titus the same Apostle gives the following charge, 'A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.'

The jurisdiction here asserted generally for the sake of preserving order in the Church is more especially called for in the admission of persons authorised to fill the pas-

toral office; for to any one who duly considers with what solemnity our Lord appointed his Apostles to their holy office, and with which they transmitted to others the authority they received, it will appear sufficiently evident that no man is permitted to intrude himself into the ministry on his own authority.

The presumptuous arrogance of self-constituted teachers is the more striking on account of the disregard they show to the precepts, and the examples contained in that very Gospel of which they claim to be ministers; besides that, their conduct is so manifestly destructive of that unity and good order, which are the very objects principally proposed in the institution of a church.

There are unfortunately in the present day but too many who are guilty of this bold usurpation; with all the charity that is due to the *persons* of such offenders, and with all the compassion we may feel for the ignorance and delusion under which some of them labour, we are neither required nor allowed to think lightly of their offence. The only pretence they have to urge is, that of an immediate personal call from the Holy Spirit himself; a pretence which certainly ought in all reason to be supported by the display of miraculous powers, such as were possessed by the Apostles, and by which *they* fairly established their claim to an immediate commission from God. All of these indeed were appointed by our Lord himself during his abode on earth, except St. Matthias and St. Paul, who were chosen by Him after his ascension; St. Matthias, upon whom the lot fell that preferred him to Joseph called Barsabas, after the eleven had prayed to the Lord Jesus that He would show whether of these two He had chosen; and St. Paul, who was called in a manner sensibly miraculous.

All the other christian ministers of the primitive Church received their commission mediately or immediately from the Apostles; who were so far from thinking the regular,

distinct, and solemn appointment of them a matter of small import, that they did not dispense with it even in the case of those who had received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their charge to the disciples on the occasion of the first institution of deacons was this—'Brethren, look ye out seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;' the persons thus selected were, as we read, set before the Apostles, and 'when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.'

Another conclusion which we cannot but infer from an attentive view of the authoritative, distinct, and regular institution of the christian Church is, that it cannot be allowable for any one to make groundless divisions in it, or wantonly to separate from it. Such conduct is uniformly and severely reprobated both by Christ and his Apostles; the prayer of the former for his disciples was that they might 'be one.' St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, warns them to mark and avoid those who 'cause divisions among them;' and he strongly censures those that existed in the Church of Corinth: 'Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?' This conduct of theirs he calls 'carnal;' that is, savouring of the original corruption of our nature, and unsuitable to the regenerated followers of Christ; and it is observable that he is not here charging them with any *heretical* opinions, but merely with the sin of party-spirit and schism.

Heresy, indeed, and schism usually go together, but they are in themselves two distinct offences; and of this it is the more necessary to remind you, because there are not a few who think very lightly of the guilt of schism, and who seem to imagine that, provided a man adheres to the *right Faith*, his union with or separation from the Church is a matter of very little moment, and may be determined according to his

own taste or convenience; a notion which, if we consult the Bible, we shall find to be utterly unwarrantable.

The toleration, indeed, which is very properly practised at present in this country has led some incautious minds to form a most fallacious judgment with respect to the nature both of heresy and schism. Because no *legal* compulsion is employed either to control men's religious opinions, or to bring them within the pale of the Church; some persons are hence led to consider both religious opinions and religious conformity as matters of no great consequence in a moral point of view. They ought, indeed, to be left to the decision of every man's own conscience; but he is accountable for his decision in the sight of God, and he will be most fearfully accountable indeed if he regards them as matters of indifference.

Doctrines, indeed, and practices contrary to the word of God we are bound to resist, by whatever Church they may be enjoined; but when no reason of this kind can be alleged, we are no less bound to conformity.

All separation must either be a *duty* or a *sin*. That the resistance of the Reformers of our Church to the abuses and encroachments of the Church of Rome was both justifiable and necessary; and that the English Church, as settled by them, is of a character truly apostolical, and such that a secession from it is justly chargeable with the sin of schism, it will be the object of the concluding Lecture to establish.

LECTURE II.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

IT was the object of the last Lecture to prove that the christian Church is a *society* established by Christ and his Apostles, and that the preservation of its unity was the last and most earnest charge of our Lord himself to his disciples.

In the present Lecture it is intended to show that the Church of England, as constituted at the Reformation, is a true member of that universal Church to which no earthly limits are assigned, and, consequently, that it is a violation of christian unity to separate from its communion.

The first part of the inquiry, therefore, relates to the disputes between us and the Church of Rome, comprehending a multitude of controversies, into the particulars of which it would be impossible now to enter. We shall confine our attention, therefore, for the present, to that claim to infallibility and spiritual supremacy which is asserted by the Church of Rome, and which we deny.

This may, indeed, be called a hinge of the whole controversy, for if once the claim be made good, all examination of disputed doctrines must cease at once; and it becomes the immediate duty of all churches to submit to that decision which is dictated by the lawful sovereign and instructor of the rest.

But when we demand scriptural proof of this extraordi-

nary claim, we are referred to the single text of St. Matthew (xvi. 16, 18), where our Saviour, in reply to the first confession of St. Peter, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' says, 'Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' Hence it is concluded that this Apostle was invested with superior authority over the rest; and (what is still more strange) because St. Peter afterwards preached at Rome and suffered martyrdom there, it is further concluded that the first bishop whom he appointed over the Church in that city, and all his successors, are entitled to the same superiority.

The first and most obvious answer to this interpretation of Scripture is, that this superiority was neither claimed by St. Peter nor acknowledged by the other Apostles.

In his own epistle he makes no allusion whatever to such a privilege. Nor have we any evidence, either in Scripture or in the writings of the Fathers, that it was ever thought of. Nay, in the question about requiring the gentile converts to conform to the Mosaic law, St. Paul we know 'withstood him to the face;' and in the full assembly of Apostles and elders at Jerusalem, when this question was discussed, St. James, and not St. Peter, presided.

If called upon for *our* sense of the passage, we answer, that we regard it as a prophetic declaration of what afterwards is so plainly related in the Acts of the Apostles. By the preaching of St. Peter the Church was *first* opened at Jerusalem, above three thousand Jews being converted in one day; and by the instrumentality of the same Apostle Cornelius the first gentile convert was made, and the door which they had hitherto believed to be shut against the

heathen world was thus opened by *him*. Upon this rock therefore, figuratively, may the Church of Christ be well said to be founded. But that his *successors* in a particular church, which was not even the scene of these transactions, are also the *rock* or *foundation* spoken of, is a conceit, not only unwarranted in Scripture, but absolutely without meaning.

That the latter part of the text conferring the power of the keys had no special relation to St. Peter, but to the Church which he was to have the glory of beginning, is sufficiently evident from the same words being addressed afterwards by our Saviour to the Apostles *collectively*, without any distinction. (*Matt.* xviii. 18.)

But, say the Papists, as the Scripture does not contain all that is wanted for the regulation of the Church, and as its meaning is liable to be variously understood, there exists a necessity for some infallible guide to settle all disputes, and to preserve uniformity of faith and practice.

Now, supposing this necessity admitted, (which is, in fact, merely an opinion of theirs, resting on no warrant of Scripture,) yet there is a total absence of all proof that the Church of *Rome* is constituted this infallible guide, or that it possesses a right to convene general councils, or to preside in them for that purpose. On the contrary, there never existed a time when this privilege was allowed or acquiesced in by the universal Church.

The churches of *imperial* and *great* cities were allowed a precedence and dignity of *rank*, although this was occasionally contested, but that the superiority or control of the Church of Rome over those of Constantinople, Alexandria, or Antioch, was admitted, is contradicted by all history. In fact, the ascendancy she acquired in the West was the slow and gradual result of a systematic ambition employing every expedient of worldly policy to promote its views; and one of the worst consequences has been, the encouragement

rather of blind superstition than of enlightened religion, because that frame of mind is obviously the most disposed to servile obedience and submission.

With this part of the subject, then, I will proceed no further, observing only, in the language of the acute Chillingworth, that the Romanists' argument is manifestly a *circle*. They prove the infallibility of the Church from a text of disputed meaning, and they maintain their own interpretation of that text to be right, because the Church is infallible.

But since the Church of England was confessedly for many ages in close and intimate alliance with the Church of Rome, consulting her authority and obeying her decrees, is it not a departure from the law of christian unity to renounce that connection, and to withdraw altogether from her communion? Rather let us say, Was the Church of England, when resolved to reform its own errors and corruptions, to be restrained from so doing by the interposition of the Church of Rome, and by the fear that she would pronounce us heretics? Such is the correct state of this question. For the authority of that Church over us being disallowed, it is rather for them to say why they do not follow our example and reform themselves.

We were convinced that many fundamental errors and gross corruptions had grown up in the Church, and we resolved, in the work of reformation, to make the Scriptures our sole standard of doctrine, and to conform, as nearly as possible, to the primitive Church in matters of discipline and practice.

We acknowledge the Church of Rome to be a branch of the true Church, corrupted, indeed, and polluted, as we ourselves once were; we lament their errors; we pray for their amendment, and we would gladly give them the right hand of fellowship in the performance of the same good work. But, in the meantime, we contend that we ourselves also are an integral

member of the Catholic Church of Christ, having that sure and certain token of it,* an unbroken succession of ministers from the time of the Apostles, and holding as we do the Holy Scriptures genuine and uncorrupted for our rule of faith.

Even had the doctrine, then, of the Church of Rome been unexceptionable, though we might respect her counsels and listen to her *advice*, we should by no means yield to her *authority*, and while her doctrines remain fundamentally corrupt and vicious, we think it not only allowable, but expedient and even necessary to withdraw from her communion.

Upon these simple principles the great work of reforma-

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* It is just possible that some few readers may misunderstand this passage as implying the *converse; i.e.* as implying (though no such thing is said) that there can be *no* true church that *wants* these marks. To guard against this mistake, and show what the Bishop's opinions were on this point, I will here cite a passage from a letter of his published in the *Memoir*, p. 195.

'I remember talking some twenty years ago on this subject with that eccentric but learned man, 'Prebendary Dennis,' who agreed with me, that it was our duty to conform as closely as possible to what we had reason to think was the perfect rule,—but that if circumstances interfered with that, we must be content with approximation —as, for instance (putting the very case you have put), if a society of Christians were placed out of the reach of all regularly-ordained ministers, I had no doubt they might and ought to administer the sacrament among themselves, keeping as near as they could to the prototype, and appointing one whom they thought fittest to perform the sacred rites. He started at this—and, having certain mysterious notions about the sacraments, he would not go so far as that with me, although he admitted the fundamental principle which I had laid down.'

It may be added (in reference to an earlier passage in the same letter), that the supposed case is far from being a merely imaginary one. In our own days a body of reformed Christians at Zillerthal, in the Austrian dominions, were in the very predicament supposed. I have adverted to this case in the *Second Essay on the Kingdom of Christ*.—Ed.

tion was begun and carried on in this country. Unlike some of the reformed churches on the Continent, we rejected nothing from the mere spirit of opposition to the papal see; and whatsoever appeared to be agreeable to Scripture, to have been approved and adopted by the primitive Church, or to be conducive to edification, was carefully retained.

In order to ascertain these points, the writings of all the early Fathers were thoroughly examined, as well as the acts of the first general councils.

These documents were used as evidences of the practice and opinions of those times, but the golden rule throughout observed, and which is justly styled by Dr. Marsh the vital principle of the Reformation, was, that 'Scripture, and Scripture only, is the rule of faith.'

The principal corruptions in matters of doctrine were, the sacrifice, as it was called, of the mass, which led to the idolatrous adoration of the elements of bread and wine; the denial of the cup to the laity; image worship; adoration of relics; the doctrine of purgatory, and of the merit of good works; the worship of the Virgin, and the invocation of the saints as mediators for man. In matters of discipline and practice also the errors were many and grievous,—performing service in an unknown tongue, keeping back the Scriptures from the people; the sale of indulgences; enforcing celibacy on the clergy and auricular confession on the people, deceiving them with false stories of pretended miracles, besides enjoining a load of superstitious rites and ceremonies which had got complete possession of the people's minds, and usurped the place of all true religion.

In the prosecution of this work (which may be said to have been completed in the fifth year of Elizabeth, when our Articles and Liturgy received their final sanction), nothing is more remarkable than the spirit of sobriety and moderation which governed the proceedings of our Reformers.

They compiled a Liturgy embracing all that was pure and

valuable in ancient forms of prayer, prescribed decent and solemn ceremonies, retained episcopacy; and, regarding a christian nation as a christian Church, they declared the *temporal* government in ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs to belong to the same sovereign.

It was scarcely to be expected that in a reform which extended over a considerable portion of Europe, every country should be guided by the same moderate principles. At Geneva, in particular, under the guidance of Calvin, a church was established on the principle of departing as widely as possible in every respect from the institutions of the papal see. Not only were corrupt and superstitious practices abolished, but the whole exterior of religious worship, the habits of the ministers, the form of administering the sacraments, and all other ecclesiastical ordinances were studiously changed; whether they were good or bad was not the question; they were regarded as having once been papal. The observance of festivals was forbidden, and instead of purifying and amending the Liturgy, all set forms were superseded by the extemporaneous prayers of the minister. Professing to be guided solely by what they found in Scripture, without regard to the practice even of the earliest churches, they established a perfect equality in the priesthood, all of whom were called Presbyters; a form of church government which was afterwards adopted in the Low Countries and in Scotland, where it has continued to the present day.

In England, from the first, there were men of enthusiastic minds, who, in their resentment against the See of Rome, were inclined to pursue the same measures. During the persecution of Queen Mary's reign, many of these fled to the Continent, and having taken refuge among the reformed churches there, more especially at Frankfort and Geneva, they returned in the following reign, confirmed in their antipathy to every form of the English Church which bore the slightest resemblance to the popish ceremonies. Hence

arose, that sect of dissenters, who under the name of Puritans, opposed the system of church government established in the reign of Elizabeth, entertaining opinions hostile to the civil, as well as to the religious establishments of the country.

Under James I. they increased in numbers and influence; and at length, in the reign of his unfortunate son, overthrew the constitution both in Church and State. The objections most strenuously maintained by them, related to the clerical vestments, and to certain forms, which, as relics of popery, they called idolatrous; such as the sign of the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, bowing at the name of Jesus, church-music, the observance of festivals and days in commemoration of saints.

If indulgence had been granted them in these points, they declared their readiness to remain in conformity with the Church of England; but it is remarkable, that after their separation, the clamour raised about these matters soon died away, and few, if any, it is presumed, would now assign them as sufficient grounds for leaving our communion. In points of doctrine there was no difference; but soon after the schism was effected, other exceptions were taken to our ecclesiastical system. More particularly—First, to the use of precomposed forms of prayer in public worship.* Secondly, to the royal supremacy. Thirdly, to the order of bishops as distinct from, and superior to, the presbytery. And being now at liberty to follow the bent of their own inclinations, they established a communion similar in all these respects to the Reformed Church of Geneva.

Upon no one of these points is it my purpose to enlarge. Suffice it to observe on the first, viz. set forms of prayer,

* Many persons are not aware that John Knox provided a liturgy for the Scotch Kirk. But the use of it being left *optional*, the natural result followed, that ministers were ashamed to use it, lest they should be supposed deficient in the gift of prayer.—See *Cautions for the Times*, No. xxv. p. 425.—Ed.

that the practice rests upon authority which it would be presumptuous to resist; set forms of prayer were used by the Jews in a religion founded by God himself; they are sanctioned by our Saviour, who has enjoined the use of one prayer, and has given it as a pattern for the composition of others. There were liturgies in the primitive Church, ascribed to St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James; and whether we admit them to have been actually composed by those persons or not, certain it is, that they were used by congregations of primitive Christians; and that the names, 'common prayers,' 'constituted prayers,' frequently occur in the writings of the earliest Fathers, who also speak of prayers used by the Apostles. 2ndly. On the subject of Royal Supremacy, much is not required to be said in the present times, for the objection is not often heard; and, perhaps the words of our church articles will now be allowed by most of our opponents to be a sufficient answer—'Where we attribute to the King's Majesty the chief government, we give not to our princes the ministering either of God's word, or of the sacraments, but that only prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly princes in Holy Scripture, by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers.'

3rdly. The third point of difference, which has been the cause of much controversy, is the government of the Church by bishops. The title of bishop, and his spiritual office could not be questioned, but the Puritans denied any distinction between bishops and presbyters, contending that of old they were used indiscriminately, and that ordination, as well as all other spiritual functions, might be discharged by presbyters alone, of which, however, they give no sufficient proof.

On the other hand, the argument for the distinct order

and office of bishop is unfolded with so much clearness, learning, temper, and candour, in the seventh book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, that (waiving the question whether that part of the work be rightly ascribed to the great Hooker, or not) I would refer you to that for entire satisfaction on this point, as well as on every other subject in dispute between us and the Nonconformists of that age.

Be it, however, observed, that although episcopacy is proved to have been a form of church government sanctioned by the Apostles, and adopted by every church for fifteen centuries,* yet such was the moderation of our reformers, that they have nowhere pronounced it to be essential to the constitution of a church, or to the validity of ordination. In our own Church, the imposition of hands by the presbytery is added to that of the bishop, because such appears to have been the custom in ancient times. There is, however, abundant proof, that bishops often ordained without the co-operation of presbyters—none that presbyters ever ordained without a bishop. Certain too, it is, that some of the more moderate reformers of the Continent lamented the interruption of this order, as a matter of necessity with *them* rather than of choice; whilst *our own*, wisely maintaining the established rule which they found sanctioned by all antiquity, yet ventured not to condemn the want of it in any other church, or to call in question the validity of *their* ordinations upon that account.

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* It is to be observed, however, that the defenders of Episcopacy as *now* existing, must set forth not only the just claim of deference to primitive precedents, but also the right of each church, to modify, on well-considered grounds, or to depart from, those precedents. For a bishop, at present, differs as much, in a most important point, from those who formerly bore that title, as a governor of a colony does from a sovereign-prince. Originally there was in each church *one* bishop; who was, of course, the chief ecclesiastical ruler of that whole church.—See *Cautions for the Times*, No. xvi. p. 317.—Ed.

We cannot close our view of these dissensions, without offering a few remarks upon the danger of hastily indulging private opinions and inclinations in matters that concern the peace and good order of the Church.

Conscience has been commonly the *first* excuse; but nothing is more deceitful than the plea of conscience, where prejudice, or passion, or dislike, or impatience of constraint, or love of rule and management have also room to operate.

The first dissenters, as we learn from their own historian, Neale, justified their separation on the ground of conscience. They could not endure the slightest vestige of popish ceremonies. The interval, however, of a few years was sufficient to dispel the prejudice, and it is no longer pleaded in vindication of the measure.

But the breach once made is not easily closed, and various causes now combine—pride, confirmed habit, entangled interests, long opposition, and mutual animosity—which render a re-union more and more difficult. Neither does the evil stop here. Schism is ever found to be the fruitful parent of schism. Within a few years, out of their own bosom, arose the sect of Independents;—enemies not only to episcopacy, but to all church government; and from that time downwards, numerous sects have continued to spring up, till at length the very idea of *union* as a christian *duty* seems to be lost from people's minds; and the motive for joining one sect rather than another, in defiance of all Scripture and all authority, is founded in each man's private inclinations, thus verifying, to the letter, the prophetic warning, that times should come 'when men would not endure sound doctrine, but after *their own lusts* should heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.' (2 *Tim.* iv. 3.)

These evils, again, are fostered and encouraged by a specious profession of liberality, and a false notion of christian charity. Christian charity is due to *all* men, even to un-

believers; but it is no charity to leave men in ignorance upon points which affect their most important interests. Neither, again, can we allow the praise of liberality to that which at best is no more than *indifference.*

Liberality consists in *bearing with* that which we *disapprove;* but if there be no *fault* in disagreeing with us, what liberality is there in *allowing* the disagreement? or, how can *he* be said to practise charity, who *concedes* nothing?

Far be it from us to deny liberty of conscience, or to treat conscientious scruples with disrespect, but if we fail to warn a brother of the danger of his ways, we are wanting in our duty, and we become in some measure chargeable with his destruction. And if an indulgence of private humour in religious matters be, as daily experience seems to prove, the prevailing error of the present times, it becomes us all as members of the true Church of Christ, to stop its progress whenever we possess the means of so doing. We shall thus, at least, stand clear of the guilt of partaking in other men's sins. Neither is the evil yet so rank as to forbid all hope of cure.

If our endeavours be earnest and persevering, we may confidently expect the aid and blessing of Almighty God, who has promised never to forsake his Church, and who declared from its first foundation that 'the gates of hell should not prevail against it.'

The duty of using such endeavours cannot be too earnestly impressed on the minds of such of you especially as are destined for the ministry. How little hope soever we may have of ever seeing the evil of schism *totally and finally* removed, we are, nevertheless, both obliged and encouraged to use our exertions in each *particular* case, for its prevention and diminution. Sickness, poverty, and many other evils, we can never expect to see banished from the earth, but we are not, for that reason, to sit down in despondingg inactivity, without endeavouring to the utmost of our power to lessen

these evils. It is in this manner that God has thought fit to make trial of our patience, our benevolence, and our zeal.

Not, however, that I would exhort you to engage in acrimonious controversies and vexatious bickerings. Let us, rather, according to the Apostle's precept, 'with meekness instruct those that oppose themselves;' and be careful to 'give no scandal in anything, that the ministry be not blamed.' Let us endeavour, by our learning, by the soundness of our doctrines, by diligence in all our spiritual functions, by a gentle and blameless deportment, and by purity of life, to keep those committed to our charge in the right way, and to win over those who have departed from it; and let us earnestly pray that God will be pleased in his good time, to heal the dissensions of his Church, and to recall to his flock those who have wandered in error, that we may at length become one fold and one shepherd.

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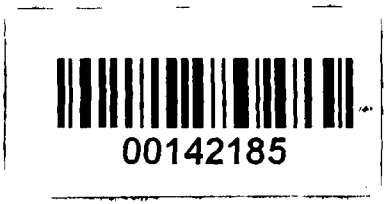
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